

## Acquittal by Resurrection

Markus Barth and  
Verne H. Fletcher

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RESURRECTION

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## Foreword

The theme of this book is the resurrection of Jesus Christ understood as the foundation of righteousness and justice. This theme has scarcely been recognized by the church or even by theologians. The modern Protestant, intimidated by rationalistic incredulity, has tended to treat the resurrection as a hard and troublesome doctrine which, fortunately, as he assumes, requires consideration on only one Sunday of the year and, perhaps, in funeral homilies. Moreover, even if one adopts a broader historical perspective, it is noteworthy that, unlike the Eastern theological tradition, Western theological thought, while affirming that "on the third day he rose again from the dead," has nonetheless given relatively more weight to the crucifixion as the primary dimension of the Christ event.

Perhaps the time is near in Western theology and church life to listen anew to the biblical witness to the resurrection, to re-evaluate its relevance, and yet to desist from any devaluation of the meaning and import of Christ's death. There exists already a marked trend away from the concern with such questions as how the resurrection can be made scientifically plausible, and whether or not it conforms to the canons of reason. The liberation of theology from these questions has led in some quarters to re-interpretation of the resurrection in existentialist categories, of-

fering the astonished hearer or reader a resurrection without myth which ultimately results in a religion, or a philosophy, without resurrection. For others the new trend has meant a new freedom to take the biblical witness at face value. It is with the latter group that the authors of this essay make common cause. We consider as normative both the event which the New Testament writers report, and their understanding of this event. As they understand it, the resurrection and enthronement of Christ constitutes not a timeless symbol, not a mere glimpse into eternity, nor a perennial moment of existential decision, but a unique event in which God in his own way embraced the totality of nature and history, and by which he is bringing his good will concerning man and all creation to fulfillment.

Such a belief in the resurrection or, to be more precise, the belief in *such* a resurrection, is inconceivable, indeed ludicrous, apart from faith in the living God of Israel, the Father of Jesus Christ. This God cannot be limited to "origins" as the cosmic turtle on whose back stands the elephant which holds up the world. Nor may this God be limited to the realm of the "ultimate," that is, confined to, or as another name for, the human spirit. He is not a god who, whether literally or figuratively, awaits beyond death the arrival of immortal souls! The living God, who raised Jesus, is nearer to nature and history in all the course of their evolution and development than is man the scientist and historian, man the transformer of nature and the maker of history. Indeed, when we ask for objective and irrefutable evidence of the reality of this living God, we are obliged to recognize that this evidence is given to us, finally and above all, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. His resurrection demonstrates that the living God in eternity and in time means to be for man, and that for this reason he is active and creative within history and nature.

By making this affirmation we do not presume to invalidate the enterprise of scientific investigation of the natural order. Since the resurrection is an event which occurs at the boundary of empirical scientific knowledge, it does not overthrow or contradict the latter, but affirms, rather, that beyond the realm of experience and sensation which is accessible to rationality and empirical



investigation, surrounding that realm and maintaining it as empirically observable and predictable, is the reality of the sovereign Lord of nature and history. His mighty deed, even the resurrection of Jesus Christ, does impinge upon the human concepts of historical and natural order; for it is unique and cannot be subsumed under general categories. The resurrection can only be understood by reference to itself, in terms defined by the event itself, and by reference to the God whose deed it is.

The relation of this event to the philosophical enterprise is perhaps more difficult to state. For philosophical reason the resurrection is not so much an ugly boundary as it is an obstacle standing in its path. Natural scientists will, insofar as their professional work dictates it, simply ignore the resurrection. Philosophers, on the other hand, cannot avoid being irritated by it. Man's critical spirit reaches out into that area which theology calls revelation, and remains skeptical. It has a right to do so, but it uses this right at its own risk. While revelation gives a knowledge which is not amenable to rational inquiry, it does not forbid reason to ask its questions. Those believing in the God who resurrected his Son will listen to these questions and will not imagine that they can overcome them in some cheap or costly synthesis. Indeed, the man who believes is also, and at the same time, the man who must search; for all his believing, he is not exempt from the tension of the ongoing quest for truth and understanding. The resolution of this tension is not to be achieved by human reason or human imagination or, for that matter, by human faith. It is rather to be received in what theology calls the *eschaton*, perfection or final consummation.

Meanwhile the unique event of Jesus Christ's resurrection is reason's greatest stumbling block. Man cannot fathom the God who acts in this fashion. But the living God can and does lay hold of uncomprehending man. And he who knows himself thus grasped recognizes himself as the believing unbeliever. In this tension he knows himself reconciled to God.

The authors of this study have heard from the Bible of the power of Jesus Christ's resurrection, and have felt constrained, each in his own fumbling way, to set forth what is given to them.

For this reason, we began our thinking from the basis of the biblical witness rather than from the needs, theories and intentions of modern man. We are convinced and hope to exemplify that a way leads from the message of the Bible directly to the heart of modern man's predicament and yearning.

In this book we have set ourselves a limited task. We do not deal with the problem of the resurrection of the saints, or of the resurrection of the body, or of the future judgment. Many aspects of the life "in Christ" are not even mentioned. It is solely and exclusively the resurrection of Jesus Christ himself upon which attention is focused. Perhaps one day, when much more has been elaborated on Christ's resurrection, it will be possible also newly to approach the many unsolved problems concerning the resurrection of the faithful and of all men.

Considering that the resurrection is not simply a *postscriptum* to the earthly life of Jesus coming to its climax in his death on the cross; believing, on the other hand, that there is a power of the resurrection which is none other than the authority and power of the risen Christ, we ask: What are the implications of the resurrection of Jesus Christ in respect to righteousness in the believer and justice in the political order?

The conception of the whole book and the presentation of the material of Part One is the work of Markus Barth. Verne H. Fletcher is responsible for the text of Part Two.

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*October 1962*

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MARKUS BARTH

**Part One**

# INTERPRETATION

# Diverse Approaches to the Mystery

## I THE MYSTERY OF RESURRECTION

Several biblical utterances proclaim explicitly that there exists a close connection between resurrection, righteousness, and justification. Some of these pertinent passages will later be quoted and scrutinized in detail. Taken together they affirm that Jesus Christ's resurrection does away with unrighteousness and sin, and establishes a new order of life of which the apostolic witness, the church, conjoined to the fact that after the death of Jesus Christ, Jews, Gentiles, and Christians yet live and are given a chance to repent of their evil, are a demonstration. Jesus Christ's resurrection is also an act preparatory for, and confirmative of, a future event, even of his coming again for the last judgment<sup>1</sup> in which all enemies of God will be confuted and all sin, including death, its evil wages, will be overcome. But the resurrection pertains not only to the future. Its relevance for the present time will be studied. Now and today, it is God's judgment on sin. Peter's threefold denial is shown to be forgiven by the risen Christ's threefold question and Peter's appointment.<sup>2</sup> The so-called "doubting

<sup>1</sup> Acts 10:40-42; 17:31.

<sup>2</sup> John 18:17-18, 25-27; 21:15 ff.

Thomas" is given all the privileges of an eyewitness apostle.<sup>3</sup> The disciples receive from the risen Lord the regenerating, purifying, illuminating, guiding Spirit. Since they are granted the power to live as those whose sin is forgiven, they will, in turn, forgive others their sins. Forgiveness of sin is to be preached in the name of the risen Christ to all nations—beginning from Jerusalem.<sup>4</sup>

The resurrection is relevant not only for the removal of sin and for the establishment of a witnessing people. Other positive and negative implications are also emphasized in the Bible. The resurrection of Christ is the solemn acceptance of Christ's sacrifice by God. It is the revelation of Jesus Christ's glory. It affects division, dispersion, despair among Israel, the Gentiles, the church. It affects the responsibility and the hope of the bodily life of man. It affects the mystery of biological and spiritual death. In this study nothing else will be considered but the relation between the resurrection and the right and wrong that is done, that may be done, or that may not be done. God raised his Son from death because of a plan and purpose related to man's life in wickedness, and man's liberation for righteousness. We shall have to show that through the resurrection, man is vindicated against all powers hostile to humanity.

But not the justification of individuals only, or the guarantee of this or that man's right, is dependent upon the resurrection. Far more is created and manifested by this event: God's own righteousness, the "theodicy," is established and revealed by it. This revelation is made in such a way that all realms and aspects of creation and creaturely life are involved. The resurrection provides, as we hope to show, resource and standard, power and inspiration, value and hope to all yearning, all working, all suffering for justice in civic, social, and political affairs.

We hold that if Jesus Christ has not been actually raised in history, all hunger, thirst, quest for righteousness is but a chimera or a pursuit of an ideal that will never come true. Man needs more than dreams and ideals. He is in dire need of such historical events,

<sup>3</sup> John 20:24-29.

<sup>4</sup> John 20:22-23; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8; 2:33.

past and future, that confirm his labors and hopes to be meaningful and true. Paul has good reason in his great chapter on resurrection to refer not only to human hope but also to human labor.<sup>5</sup>

This, then, is the proposition concerning Jesus Christ's resurrection which has to be illustrated and substantiated:

"God's way of righting wrong,"<sup>6</sup> the acquittal of culprits and the new life granted to them, the confidence, courage, strength to labor and to hope in the realm of political and social structures—these things are inseparably bound up with the resurrection of Jesus Christ. An answer to all questions concerning right and wrong depends upon awareness of the mysterious events of resurrection. There is no righteousness worthy of its name without resurrection.

There are better and worse ways to approach and to explain the mystery of the resurrection. There are higher and lower ways to pay respect to the two parts of the Bible, the Old and New Testaments. There are brighter and darker modes of speaking about the good Lord and the validity of the forgiveness he grants to sinners. There are broad ways and narrow paths to proclaim the justification of the godless. There are timid and bold methods by which to understand and to take up the church's ministry in the world. There are cheap and costly means by which to meet the imminent danger of destructive war. It seems that all these issues have been but seldom confronted in the light of the resurrection. If there is, as Paul asserts in Philippians 3:10, a "power of his resurrection," then the resurrection may well have relevance for alternatives and decisions such as these.

What do we know of the resurrection of Christ?

While the apocryphal Gospel of Peter confronts its readers with a rather disgusting description of the mode of Jesus Christ's

<sup>5</sup> See I Cor. 15:10, 19, 58.

<sup>6</sup> This is the New English Bible's inspired and inspiring translation of *dikaïosune theou*, in Rom. 1:17. Throughout Part One of this volume, the reader will occasionally find New Testament citations phrased in a way that differs from the Revised Standard Version. Unless the translator of the passage is specifically mentioned, the translation was prepared by the author.



resurrection,<sup>7</sup> <sup>1</sup> the canonical books of the New Testament are conspicuous by their reticence to say anything about the ways and means by which the resurrection of the crucified Jesus was performed. When the four Evangelists, Paul, or other authors of New Testament books speak of the resurrection, they consider it sufficient to state: (1) It was God who raised his crucified Son on the third day after his death and burial; (2) God raised him through the life-giving Spirit, in his power, or by his word, that is, through the same means by which he also governs Israel, the church, and all that he has created; (3) only a limited number of firsthand witnesses saw the risen Jesus in person; (4) the power of the resurrection is already experienced in the congregations, with joy but also with fear and trembling, and it will finally be felt and respected by all creatures in heaven, on earth, and under the earth.<sup>8</sup>

Biblical testimonies abstain from satisfying the demands of curiosity. We observe the same feature in the biblical description of the miracles wrought by Jesus. In exceptional cases only,<sup>9</sup> some details are given of the technique employed in the performance of a miraculous healing. The rest is silence; the mysterious feat and its exemplary meaning, not the know-how regarding its method, are considered decisive.

Two ways are open to discover the meaning of Jesus Christ's resurrection. We have to listen to *what* the first witnesses and the congregation of the faithful confessed and preached in their explanation of the event. And it is necessary to observe *how* they spoke of the resurrection, and in which context they understood and explained its impact.

In either case, we have to start from the fact that the biblical records of the resurrection do not permit a separation between the fact and its effects, or between the naked event and its understanding and preaching. The inseparable connection between both

<sup>7</sup> Notes indicated by bold-face numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.) are found in the Comments at the end of this book (pp. 151 ff.).

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., Rom. 1:4; 6:4; 8:11; II Cor. 4:14; I Thess. 4:14 ff.; Acts 2:32-33; 13:33; Heb. 1:5-13; 5:10; 13:20; Phil. 2:10-11; 3:10.

<sup>9</sup> As in Mark 7:32-37; 8:22-26; John 9:6-7; cf. Acts 19:12.

is not only characteristic of the resurrection reports, but is basic to all theological thought. Of that God of whom the Bible gives witness, and of those deeds of God of which the Bible tells, nobody can speak without also speaking of Israel and the church; that is, of the people, the prophets, the apostles whom God chose to be his witnesses by bearing testimony to his deeds in and before the world. We know nothing of God except through his acts of election and judgment. We do not know of any pure acts or any abstract actuality of God, but we are bound to learn from his acts toward and through his people. It is not a corollary to God's acts, but essential to them, that they pertain to men and are witnessed by them. Therefore, nobody will be able to get hold of the resurrection unless he endorses the human witness as part of the event itself.

It belongs to the special character of the Bible that the great events told and interpreted in it are not gauged against impersonal, so-called objective standards, but are rendered as they were believed and confessed by chosen men of God. Since the people first chosen by God are the Jews, and since both the Old and the New Testament books have been written by men of Jewish origin, it is not surprising that the interpretation of the meaning of the resurrection bears traits that can be understood only with the background of Hebrew history, worship, and literature.

In order to prepare a line toward our main study, we ask first: How does the New Testament speak of the resurrection of Christ? What is its method in describing and explaining this astonishing and perplexing event? Then we shall ask for the ways chosen by biblical interpreters.

## II ESSENTIALS OF THE BIBLICAL TESTIMONY

A reader of the New Testament can make the following four observations.

1. The resurrection of Jesus is narrated and preached as a *novel and revolutionary event*. Except in the picture Luke gives, in Acts 23, of Paul's desperate attempt to force support from one of the



Sanhedrin's parties, it is not assumed that a great number of people, by their *Weltanschauung*, by their religious beliefs, or by their psychic attitudes, were preconditioned to accept as true the story of Jesus' resurrection.

The Gospel accounts take pains to show that the original disciples (with the exception of the one "whom Jesus loved," that is, John<sup>10</sup>) are unwilling to believe the message of the resurrection. Neither the prophetic words Jesus had said to them about the raising of the Son of Man, the Shepherd of his people, after his suffering and death,<sup>11</sup> nor the resurrection of individuals, like Jairus' daughter and Lazarus; neither the angels' nor the women's announcement about the reason for the tomb being empty, nor the report of fellow disciples, can persuade them. Even the appearance of the risen Jesus before them does not immediately abate their doubts and objections; they *do not* recognize him at once because they *will not* believe in his identity. They know as much as any modern man of fairy tales; they believe rather in the presence of a ghost than of the risen Jesus himself.<sup>12</sup> Before Jesus had actually risen from the dead and had in person convinced them that he lived (and how bodily and substantially he lived), they knew not of such a resurrection as Jesus'. What Jesus, or the Old Testament, or other sources said about "raising" may have had for them many a physical, legal, and political meaning.<sup>13</sup> However, they were ignorant of that sense which the word received in Jesus' resuscitation.

But were there not pharisaical and sectarian circles from which the disciples might have taken over some notions of bodily resurrection? Indeed, in some later parts of the Old Testament and intertestamental apocryphal books, various groups among the Pharisees spoke of it, and people as different as King Herod and

<sup>10</sup> John 20:2, 8; cf. 13:23; 21:7, 20.

<sup>11</sup> Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34; 14:28; John 2:19-22; 10:18.

<sup>12</sup> Luke 24:22-23, 37-41; John 20:25; 21:4.

<sup>13</sup> E.g., a sleeping or a sick person is raised or rises from his mat; a witness steps up to the bar; a political leader like the judges or David, or a prophet like Moses, is "raised." See A. Oepke's article, "Egeiro," in G. Kittel, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* (Stuttgart, 1932), II, 332 ff.

Lazarus' sister expressed belief in it.<sup>14</sup> Behind this relatively late Jewish belief stood the convictions that (a) the righteous persons, who in the evil days of the present are suffering from the hands of men, will be gloriously vindicated and rewarded by God; or (b) that a great leader and redeemer of Israel will one day (again) stand up; or (c) that Israel or all men will be restored to new life. When the last conviction is separated from the first two, the Jewish belief in resurrection assumes a distinct resemblance to some non-Jewish notions. Whatever influence Persian and other near-Eastern ideas concerning immortality or resurrection may have exerted upon the formation and formulations of the Jewish faith, the belief in bodily resurrection and national restoration appears to have been a specifically Jewish dogma.

This dogma was far from generally accepted. Jesus' disciples appear not to have known, or to have ignored it. For, according to one Gospel, the disciples, after hearing Jesus speak for a second time of the Son of Man's future resurrection, "discussed among themselves what this rising from the dead could mean." If this surprising Marcan (9:10) note refers to a historical fact, it need not mean that the disciples stood near the Sadducees or other rationalistic Jewish groups that refused to believe in resurrection. But it does show that among the Jews contemporary to Jesus, bodily resurrection was not a generally accepted, unequivocal belief. In the New Testament, it is in manifold ways attested that precisely those who might have established a bridge between some current Jewish beliefs and the resurrection of Jesus resisted doing so.

Similarly, the Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament do not presuppose that bodily resurrection was a well-defined article

<sup>14</sup> See Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2; Job 19:25-27; II Macc. 12:42-45; but cf. Isa. 26:14; Job 14:12, 14. Fr. Nötscher, *Altorientalischer und alttestamentlicher Auferstehungsglauben* (Würzburg, 1926); A. T. Nikolainen, *Auferstehungsglauben in der Bibel und ihrer Umwelt*, I (Helsinki, 1944); W. Eichrodt, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, III (Leipzig, 1939), 148 ff.; C. Barth, *Errettung vom Tode* (München, 1947); R. Martin-Achard, *De la Mort à la Résurrection* (Neuchâtel and Paris, 1956); G. F. Moore, *Judaism*, II (Cambridge, 1954), 379 ff., cf. I (1954), 486 ff.; Acts 23:6-9; Mark 6:14; John 11:24.

of everybody's creed. The Corinthians (I Cor. 15:11) appear to have accepted Jesus Christ's resurrection, but<sup>15</sup> they had anticipated or spiritualized their own resurrection so radically that they retained neither a hope beyond the "present life" nor any respect for a final judgment which might control their daily conduct.<sup>16</sup> The Thessalonians and the readers of the Fourth Gospel and of Revelation needed to be reminded and instructed of the resurrection's distinctive meaning.<sup>17</sup>

How is the novelty of Jesus' specific resurrection communicated and explained? Canonical Gospels and apostolic writings alike do not attempt to produce any proof of the possibility, rationality, or respectability of the resurrection. They do not ask whether or when it may be opportune to speak of it. They are satisfied to tell that Jesus Christ was raised, to add narrative elements or doctrinal statements that explain the power and relevance of this event, and to call for repentance and faith. Resurrection is not considered as belonging to a series of an otherwise well-known genus of events.<sup>18</sup> Should it, perhaps, be called a miracle, or a sign? The New Testament does not subsume it under such a general title.<sup>19</sup> There are many signs—but only one resurrection of Christ. In Acts 10:34 ff., and in other brief summaries of Jesus' life, the resurrection does not appear among the miracles. According to the Fourth Gospel (2:11, 22) the resurrection is the key to the signs and sayings of Jesus, rather than a sign itself. So it is an event in its own right, and must be studied as such.

The eyewitnesses and second-generation preachers of the risen Christ tell what has been heard, seen, delivered, experienced. Their approach to the mystery is pragmatic and specific, not

<sup>15</sup> Like Hymenaios and Philetos, II Tim. 2:18; or like the Gnostic Menander, Irenaeus, I, 23:5?

<sup>16</sup> I Cor. 15:12, 19, 32; II Cor. 5:10.

<sup>17</sup> I Thess. 4:16; John 5:28 f.; 11:25-26; Rev. 20, etc.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. B. F. Westcott, *The Gospel of Resurrection* (7th ed.; London and Cambridge, 1891), p. 52; A. M. Ramsey, *The Resurrection of Christ* (London, 1956), p. 35.

<sup>19</sup> Except if by the Sign of Jonah the resurrection should be meant, in Matt. 12:39 ff. or Luke 11:29 ff. It is more likely that in these texts, as in Matt. 24:30, the total ministry of the coming Son of man is focused upon, rather than one specific event only.



speculative and generalizing. "He was raised; . . . he has appeared; . . . we are witnesses." They do not ask, "What can we do with a risen Jesus?" Rather they state what he, the resurrected, does and will do for them and all men. By the news of the resurrection people "were cut to the heart" (Acts 2:37)—but no way to escape the impact made by the message of the great event was offered to them. A critical analysis, or experimental testing of that event, was not even attempted. It would have availed them little or nothing at all.

2. For the biblical witnesses, and probably for their first listeners and readers as well, there is no difference between the *factuality, reality, actuality* of the crucifixion and of the resurrection events. They possess the same historicity. Both belong together; they cannot be preached separately, though there may be situations and problems which demand that one of them be temporarily more emphasized than the other.<sup>20</sup>

But need not the resurrection be called and treated as a myth? The Gospels, Acts, several Epistles, and the Apocalypse have a simple, common method to mark the distinction between what is said about Christ's resurrection, and what is called myth.<sup>2</sup> They speak unanimously of eyewitnesses of the resurrected Christ. "We saw his glory. . . . God raised this Jesus; of this we are all witnesses. . . . You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised . . . you will see him. . . . He appeared. . . . I have seen Jesus, the Lord. . . . We became eyewitnesses of his majesty."<sup>21</sup> If they were speaking solely of a voice that was heard by them, of a feeling that was formed in them, of a sense of mission that fell upon them with irresistible force, or of a private or communal cultic experience and vision—then their reports and references might stand on the same level as some mystics' intuitions and meditations. Since they do speak of seeing him, or touching him, or eating with him, or of all these ways of experience combined,<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Rom. 4:25; 6:3-11; 14:8-9 with I Cor. 1:23; 2:2; 15:11 ff.

<sup>21</sup> John 1:14; I John 1:1-4; Acts 2:32; Mark 16:6-7; I Cor. 15:5 ff.; 9:1; II Pet. 1:16, etc.

<sup>22</sup> Luke 24; John 20-21; I John 1:1-3.

they confront their hearers and readers with a concrete, this-worldly, material presentation of the reality and meaning of the resurrection which assaults not only the sensibilities of the Sadducees and the Athenian philosophers,<sup>23</sup> but those of every man. They might have spared themselves and their interpreters many difficulties if they had given the slightest indication that their speech referred to events that, unlike the crucifixion, did *not* occur at a given place, at a specific time, before chosen witnesses! But they do not spare us such difficulties. However much and deeply they interpret the event, they denote the event as an *event*, not as a timeless symbol. And for this reason they do not invite an allegorical or demythologizing interpretation.<sup>3</sup>

But does not the faith, which is "mixed" (Heb. 4:2) with what the apostles heard, saw, touched, reported, and taught, somehow discredit the reliability of their utterances?<sup>24</sup> Does not the resurrection appear to be rather a postulate or product than the basis of their faith? The answer from the reports is negative. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is not the result of some people's creative faith. If that were the case, the many references to disbelief, doubt, lack of recognition, dumbness of the eyewitnesses<sup>25</sup> would have to be excised from the records of the resurrection. According to the testimonies as they stand, the original witnesses of the risen Jesus Christ did not want to believe and were unable to believe before they were convinced by special words and deeds of the risen One. Therefore, certain events are the basis of resurrection faith, but credulity or faith is not considered the basis of the resurrection itself.

Or should the early church and the New Testament writers, especially Luke and the author of the Fourth Gospel, be suspected or charged with using a subtle, apologetically motivated, and novelistically executed trick?<sup>24</sup> Should it be assumed that the passages dealing with the doubt, disbelief, and final birth of faith

<sup>23</sup> Mark 12:18-27; Acts 23:6-10; 17:31-32.

<sup>24</sup> According to Origen, *Contra Celsum*, II, 55, Celsus had argued that the resurrection tales are a product of hysterical females, delusion by sorcery, dreams, wishful thinking, hallucination.

<sup>25</sup> Matt. 28:17; Luke 24:11, 25, 37 f., 41; John 20:14, 25 ff.; 21:4, 7; Mark 16:8, 11, 13, 14; Acts 9:5.

in the women and disciples were simply invented and inserted into an earlier tradition for the purpose of adorning with greater probability what appears to be incredible? Let it be granted that original reports may have been augmented by well-intended accretions; let note be taken of an artist's or preacher's literary liberty—yet it is unlikely, and, so far, by no means proved that a congregation and biblical writers who depended totally on specific historical deeds of God, as did the Jews and Christians, should have simply *invented* incidents and dialogues reporting how the unbelief of the resurrected Christ's first witnesses was overcome!

It belongs to the peculiarity of biblical historiography that the weakness and obstruction with which God's witnesses meet the appearance of God, and the commission by him, are not bypassed with silence or recommended for oblivion. As in the Old Testament, Israel tells her own story—rather to her own shame than to her greater glory—so the account of Christ's resurrection is not related without mentioning that almost all witnesses were unprepared, unwilling, unworthy. Had their unbelief not been overcome, they would never have spoken of the resurrection (cf. Mark 16:8). Since it was overcome, we possess testimonies of believers only. As little as an eyewitness to the crucifixion would be discredited by his faith in Christ, as little does the faith engendered in those who saw the risen Lord disqualify their testimony.<sup>5</sup>

Actually, the decisive tenor of the biblical references to the resurrection of Jesus Christ lies in the emphasis which is put upon the identity of the raised with the cursed and executed one, and upon the fact that within the short span of three days both events, the death and the resurrection, took place bodily, and not symbolically; really, not virtually; tangibly, not spiritually; watched by men of flesh and blood, not fabricated by hallucination. Had the New Testament writers known of the devices of the twentieth century, they would perhaps have insisted upon the confirmation afforded by a camera, a recording machine, or a newspaper reporter. On the Damascus road, Paul's unbelieving companions were not left entirely empty. If they did not hear and



see all that happened when the risen Jesus appeared, yet their lack of destination for a special ministry and their lack of faith did not exclude them from either seeing a light or hearing a voice.<sup>26</sup>

However, there is a difference to be noted. The extensive description of the passion and crucifixion which is found in the Gospels, and the briefer references to the suffering and death of Christ contained in Acts, in most of the Epistles, and in Revelation inform hearers and readers that by men Jesus was betrayed, denied, tried, condemned, delivered, and executed. Since the agents of the trial and execution of Jesus were men (that is, disciples of Jesus, Jewish leaders and masses, and Gentile officials and soldiers); since, further, the deeds done by these men—whether or not the description is accurate and historically verifiable in every detail—are analogous to human deeds that might have been done or repeated at any time, few historians have uttered fundamental doubt of the historicity of Jesus Christ's death. And no contemporary of the apostles or the Evangelists had reason to question the factuality of the death of Jesus. But the resurrection is not analogous to human deeds. According to the biblical accounts, many men killed Jesus, but God alone raised him from death. Killing and dying are proper to *man*; raising the dead is left to God alone. The hate, despair, rebellion of man seem to triumph against God in the passion of Christ. The power and victory of God over the consequence of sin break through in the resurrection.

Are, therefore, the crucifixion and the resurrection two different sorts of events, of history, of narration? This may appear so for a modern reader of the Bible who is used to differentiating sharply between the realm of the natural and the sphere of the supernatural, or between events, facts, and rules that are scientifically verifiable and others that are preferably delegated to the uncontrollable dominion of feelings, guesswork, or myth. But not

<sup>26</sup> The reports given in Acts 9:7; 22:9; 26:13-14 contain contradictory elements. Also it is not exactly known what or how much was seen and heard by the "more than five hundred brethren" who, according to I Cor. 15:6, became eyewitnesses of the Lord's appearance.

so for the biblical witnesses. According to them, God's plan is carried out both in the deliverance of Christ unto death and in his resurrection. We shall later discuss the divine Must that is fulfilled on the cross and on Easter day. However much men contribute to the condemnation and execution of Jesus, God acts in this history. And correspondingly it has to be stated: However impotent man is to contribute anything to raising Jesus from the dead, it is yet man's history which is made and takes a new turn in that event. Neither history nor time is for the biblical writers an empty table on which only a certain amount of things may be piled, and on which, incidentally, this or that person and event make their appearance and leave some tracks. History is for them the sequence of the events that took place, take place, and will take place between God and man; and time is the opportunity and order which God gives to his own and man's deeds. The history which God made by the death and resurrection of Christ opposes, meets, and cuts into all other concepts and supposed realities of history. If the history of Jesus Christ's death is in many regards typical and a highlight of man's godless history, then the quick occurrence of the resurrection after Jesus Christ's death is narrated in order to show that man and the history he makes do not remain "God-forsaken." The one who cried, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" was raised. God's interference has taken care of man-made history. Man's history is countered by God's history with man.

We can sum up our second observation concerning the mode of the biblical references to Christ's resurrection by saying: The historicity of the resurrection is attested in such fashion that it confronts directly all summaries and all details of a godless history. If the essence of history should be sought and found not in an infinite becoming and dying, evolving and decaying, seeking and failing, but in God's struggle and care for man,<sup>27</sup> then the resurrection is to be considered at least as historical, if not more so, as the death of Christ suffered from the hands of his enemies.

<sup>27</sup> See G. v. Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (München, 1960), II, 119 ff., 239 f.; J. M. Robinson, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Markus-Evangeliums* (Zürich, 1956).



3. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is presented as an event that *concludes one era and inaugurates another*. "In the last days, says the Lord, I shall pour out my Spirit" (Acts 2:17; cf. 2:20). "In these last days God spoke to us by the Son" (Heb. 1:2). "To me is given all power. . . . I am with you always, to the end of time" (Matt. 28:18-20). If death is the limit of human life, how much more does resurrection exceed its normal devolution! The day of resurrection is the day on which the Lord takes over for good and fulfills all his promises (Acts 3:24). This day was given the name by which the prophets had called the final visitation of God—even "the day of the Lord" (Rev. 1:10).<sup>28</sup> So the resurrection day is not a day only, but *the Day*. On this day the new aeon begins, and the new man is created by birth from above. The first man was a living soul, but the last man, the resurrected Jesus, is life-giving Spirit. If Adam dragged many to death, how much more will Jesus Christ raise them from the dead?<sup>29</sup> The old aeon was limited by death, and it was subjected to death and the fear of death. With the resurrection the new aeon starts; death has no power beyond death. The raised Lazarus (John 11) may have to die again; his resurrection is but a sign. But over the resurrected Jesus Christ, death has no power. The resurrection "swallows up" death (I Cor. 15:54). The nature of resurrection is always coming and new; the essence of death can only be passing and senile.

The new aeon is not, it should be noted, simply the restoration of a former state, that is, of creation as it was before the Fall. The maxim "*Endzeit* is equal to *Urzeit*" (the last things shall be as the first) does not apply here. For here is "new creation," and not just something like the old.<sup>30</sup> Little wonder that amazement, stupefaction, trembling, fear, and joy fill those who have heard and are being convinced of the resurrection of Jesus. They are exposed to a reality, a life, and an experience which they cannot grasp, compare, control, apply, or dismiss at random. It bursts the old wine skins. It suits not the old garments. It is the presence

<sup>28</sup> Cf. II Cor. 6:2.

<sup>29</sup> Rom. 5:12 ff.; I Cor. 15:21 f., 45; John 1:13; 3:3 ff.; Heb. 2:10.

<sup>30</sup> Gal. 6:15; II Cor. 5:17; Rev. 21.

of the eternal God and of eternal life itself, here and now, as the Fourth Gospel states with especial emphasis. Whatever traces of the old aeon may yet encircle and blind the human race, whatever principalities and powers may still assail or tempt men—all have found their match and master. "The night is far gone; the day is at hand. . . . Now is the day of salvation" (Rom. 13:12; II Cor. 6:2).

A question that may be raised at this point is the following: How is it made clear that by the resurrection more was intended and brought about than a change in man's self-understanding, in his consciousness of the world, and in his beliefs concerning God? It is obvious that the New Testament writers describe and explain the resurrection of Christ as an event of greatest *anthropological* relevance. According to the Gospels, there is no appearance of the risen Christ which does not mean commissioning of a woman, a man, or of a group of people. It is necessary to affirm<sup>31</sup> that what is said about Jesus' resurrection implies an experience or a conviction of forgiveness and new being. In his letters to the Colossians and Ephesians, Paul does not speak of the resurrection of Jesus without affirming that with Christ the saints have been co-resurrected.<sup>32</sup> *His* resurrection has indeed anthropological repercussions!

But the meaning of resurrection is not only described in anthropological, existential, subjectivist terms. It has a *cosmic* relevance which is hinted at when the Gospels speak of "all creation . . . all nations . . . the end of time." Perhaps the sea and the fish mentioned in John 21 point to it also. Paul, I Peter, Hebrews, and Revelation call Jesus Christ the firstborn of *all* creation; they hint the present and future submission to the feet of Christ of all principalities, powers, and angels, of the giving of one head to all things, and of the preliminary and final conquest of

<sup>31</sup> With E. Hirsch, *Die Auferstehungsgeschichten und der christliche Glaube* (Tübingen, 1940), esp. pp. 42 ff.; and P. Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), II, 156 f.

<sup>32</sup> According to Thess., Rom., Cor., the resurrection *with* Christ is a future event. For possible reasons for the distinctive witness of the respective different groups of Pauline (and deuterio-Pauline?) letters, see W. Hahn, *Mitsterben und Mitaufstehen mit Christus* (Gütersloh, 1937).

Satan.<sup>33</sup> For some time, interpreters may still grope in the dark when it comes to explaining what exactly Paul and others mean by principalities, powers, thrones, lordships, aeons, elements of the world, names.<sup>6</sup> Since at times the state, the law, rulers, customs, death, and Satan are reckoned among them, it may be wise not to consider them elements of an outmoded ancient world view, but to understand them as nomenclatures for what today is summed up under the wide concept of "institutions." Some psalms, (for example, Pss. 2; 8; 110) speak of "the enemies," or of "the all," thrown at the king's feet. Paul probably means instruments and agents of politics, tradition, nature, and history, when he refers to the principalities. More recently, these powers are called ideologies, systems, necessities, orders, governments, agencies, courts, academies, banks, managements, unions, majorities, minorities, prejudices, rights. Also natural events like plagues, droughts, and death, as well as great men and names of world history, belong to them.

It is characteristic of New Testament references to the resurrection of Christ that they contain a multitude of suggestions illustrating how the new time, now arrived, pertains to far more than man's passive or active attitude to the time in which he lives. It is made plain that God, through the resurrection and enthronement of his Son, has done and is doing something which changes the character of these powers and structures that heretofore appeared unchangeable and almost omnipotent. The New Testament affirms that man's attitude, consciousness, work, and life are changed by the resurrection, because the hitherto determining factors are being brought under God's control.<sup>7</sup>

4. References to the resurrection are spiced by statements that Jesus was raised "*according to the Scriptures*" (I Cor. 15:4), or following an imperative whose origin is God's will, God's plan, and God's revelation in the history of Israel.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:18, 20; Eph. 1:10, 22-23; Col. 1:15, 20; 2:15; I Cor. 15:25-27; Rom. 8:38-39; I Pet. 3:22; Heb. 1:6-7, 13; 2:5 ff.; Rev. 5:20-21.

<sup>34</sup> Mark 8:31; Luke 24:26, 46; Acts 2:24 ff., etc.



Anything but agreement dominates scholarly discussion about the age and genuineness, the appropriateness and purpose of the connections which are thus made between the resurrection and certain Old Testament events, persons, and sayings.<sup>8</sup> But however great the interpreters' dissents may be, it is typical of the neotestamental description and proclamation of Jesus Christ that not only his coming, ministry, suffering and death, but also his resurrection, are related to the history of persons and of the people, to prophecies and hopes, to the Temple and the literature of Israel. The resurrection accounts gathered by Luke and combined in the last chapter of his Gospel appear to be variations on this one topic, even the fulfillment of the history, hope, and writ of Israel, in the resurrection.<sup>35</sup>

Some New Testament authors show the same tendency. One among many possible purposes of these references is to give help for the interpretation of a given event. The hearers and readers of a Gospel or Epistle are pointed to the sense in which Jesus and (or) his messengers wanted the recited events to be understood; they are not left without road markings and rails to follow.<sup>36</sup> Haphazard explanation of the great act of God is excluded. The message and interpretation of the resurrection is not thrown at the mercy or fancy of its readers. The New Testament does not say, a corpse was revived and you must accept it—whatever it may mean! The resurrection is narrated, preached, explained, or mentioned as a deed that was planned, prophesied, performed by God, who is faithful to his promise; it is an event that makes good sense and calls for faith. With the help of Old Testament quotations and allusions, many resurrection texts of the New Testament supply an interpretation of the perplexing event's meaning and application.

It may prove wise to follow, even in a new approach to the

<sup>35</sup> Cf. P. Schubert, "Structure and Significance of Luke 24," *Neutestamentliche Studien für R. Bultmann* (Berlin, 1954), pp. 165 ff., esp. 173 ff.

<sup>36</sup> C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (New York, 1953), p. 12, does not follow the host of those who attribute nothing else but apologetic aims to the Old Testament quotations found in the New Testament. According to Dodd, not the veracity, but "the significance attached to these events is mainly indicated by references to the Old Testament."



mystery of the resurrection, the lead given by the biblical writers. An interpretation of the New Testament which makes use of the Old Testament, and especially an understanding of the resurrection of Jesus Christ which relies upon the references to Old Testament texts made in New Testament resurrection texts, will disclose hidden or forgotten aspects of resurrection. To those hidden aspects belongs the interrelation between resurrection and righteousness, which is the topic of this study.

### III HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS OF BIBLE INTERPRETERS

Before we turn finally to those biblical texts that show how inseparable is the connection between resurrection and righteousness, at least four of the most frequently discussed aspects of Jesus Christ's resurrection will be presented. The mystery of resurrection has been approached in ways and directions that either proved blind alleys or detours, or that have led forward a good distance although ignoring some biblical utterances on the resurrection that ought not be neglected. While the first way to be described is most immediately indicated by a trend of the Bible itself, the other three follow directions that appear to be inspired not by the Bible, but rather by different sorts of reasoning based upon more or less certain scientific, historical, or philosophical information.

In Western theological thought,<sup>37</sup> the justification of the sinner is usually related much more closely to the death than to the

<sup>37</sup> Among the exceptions we mention: W. Künneth, *Theologie der Auferstehung* (4th ed.; München, 1951); K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV, 1-3 (Edinburgh, 1956-62); G. Koch, *Die Auferstehung Jesu Christi* (Tübingen, 1959); R. R. Niebuhr, *Resurrection and Historical Reason* (New York, 1957); F. X. Durrwell, *La résurrection de Jésus* (Paris and Le Puy, 1960), Eng. trans.: *The Resurrection* (New York, 1960); D. M. Stanley, *Christ's Resurrection in Pauline Soteriology* (Rome, 1961). These authors, each in his own way and far from showing the outlines of a growing consensus, are pressing forward toward a new assessment of the resurrection; their goal is not to discredit by any means the traditional *theologia crucis*, but to bring to new light elements of the full biblical witness that have not yet been recognized in Western theology.

resurrection of Christ.<sup>9</sup> The "problem of theodicy" may find some treatment under the locus Creation or Providence. Philosophers and theologians are inclined to connect it with the "Problem of Evil," or "of Suffering," rather than with the event and story of Jesus Christ's resurrection. The quest for the establishment of justice and peace in social regard is either left to political, economic, cultural giants and experts who may be ignorant or negligent in matters theological and eschatological, or it is monopolized by hierarchs, canon lawyers, well-meaning sectarian zealots who presume that organization and laws, rather than a mystery like the resurrection, provide a solid basis for changes. In some cases, resurrection may be respected as a fine and meaningful symbol for the victory of light over darkness, or of hope over gloom; or it may be tolerated as a quaint sort of guarantee for some people's belief in an ultimate punishment and reward. But it is not treated as the foundation of all quests for righteousness and justice.

Despite distinctions in details, Roman Catholic theologians, the Reformers, the Protestant orthodox fathers, and most more recent interpreters follow upon the classic way of Western theology as it was carefully paved by Anselm of Canterbury's doctrine of atonement. Western theologians link forgiveness and justification closer to the death than to the resurrection of Christ. Explicit biblical statements like the following vindicate them:

They are justified . . . through redemption . . . which is (made) in Christ's blood (Rom. 3:24-25).

We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of the trespasses (Eph. 1:7).

Without bloodshed there is no forgiveness (Heb. 9:22).

You were ransomed . . . with the precious blood of Christ, as it were of a lamb (I Pet. 1:18-19).

The blood of Jesus . . . cleanses us from all vice (I John 1:7).

He freed [*var. lect.*: washed] us from our sins by his blood (Rev. 1:5).

The Son of man came . . . to give his life as a ransom (Mark 10:45).

The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep (John 10:11).

This is my covenant blood poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins (Matt. 26:28).

Such passages urgently invite their hearers and readers to understand and explain the death of Christ as a sacrifice.<sup>38</sup> In his death, Jesus Christ bore the sins of the people in a fashion that was announced or foreshadowed by the ministry of the High Priest and the Righteous Servant of Old Testament times,<sup>39</sup> but which became effective and real only when Christ was both priest and victim, atoner and means of atonement.<sup>40</sup> As the people's representative he accepted the guilt and bore the punishment. He "prayed them out" (*exilaskesthai*) and upon his intercession, peace and freedom from sin was granted to them by God.

Thus the crucifixion is more than a crime committed by men. It has more than a merely negative purpose and effect. The crucified is the gift of God by whom God does away with man's old life and its consequences, *and* the ground on which God gives peace, that is, the right relationship to himself and to fellow man.

What role has the resurrection in this act of God? Sometimes interpreters ascribe to the resurrection the unveiling of the secret of the crucifixion—the resurrection then serves as an eye opener. But at times more is attributed to it: the sacrifice seems not yet accepted by God,<sup>41</sup> and the positive effect of the sacrifice of Christ is considered not only hidden, but withheld, not yet distributed, not yet enjoyed—as long as the power of the resurrection is not added to the weakness of the cross. It is by the resurrection that the sacrifice is declared to be the final revelation, the certain guarantee, the wide distribution, the exemplification and beginning of new life. The resurrection, in this case, completes and confirms the new life which was prepared by the abolition and end of the old.<sup>10</sup> If crucifixion means justification, then resurrection means sanctification—using these terms as defined by Calvin and his followers. The *bodily* character of the resurrection

<sup>38</sup> M. Barth, *Was Christ's Death a Sacrifice?* (Edinburgh, 1961)

<sup>39</sup> Exod. 28; Lev. 16; Exod. 32:32; Isa. 53; Ezek. 4:4.

<sup>40</sup> Heb. 5-10; Mark 10:45; 14:24; Rom. 3:24-25; I Cor. 1:30; 6:20; Gal. 3:13; I Pet. 2:24; 3:18; Rev. 1:5, etc.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. F. X. Durrwell, *The Resurrection* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1960), pp. 60-72.



serves then to underscore that man on earth and in time (rather than a future, spiritualized, or ideal man) is sanctified by God's deed.

We observe, however, that some New Testament utterances appear to disturb the harmony of the texts and interpretations just quoted. The exclusive or uniquely intimate relation between Jesus' death and our justification, or between his resurrection and our sanctification, is put into question or needs more qualification. For we hear, "I sanctify myself for them (*sc.* by my suffering and death) in order that they, too, be sanctified in truth. . . . We are sanctified through the offering of Jesus Christ's body, once for good and all" (John 17:19; Heb. 10:10). Thus, in the Fourth Gospel and in Hebrews, man's sanctification rather than justification is attributed to the cross of Christ.<sup>42</sup> And in Romans 4:25, justification is connected with Jesus Christ's resurrection: "He was raised for our justification."

We conclude, it is necessary that the attempt be made to throw more light upon the interrelation of resurrection and righteousness.

But first, we must consider what possible gains might be made by submitting the resurrection to scientific, historical, and philosophical questioning. For not only strictly theological or moral problems are posed by the resurrection. It has been asked: (1) How is the resurrection related to facts, events, processes, "laws" of nature—even to things or phenomena that can be observed and described more and more accurately, if not controlled or defined, by the methods of natural science? (2) How is resurrection related to specific historic events of the past and present that are—their uniqueness and individuality notwithstanding—consequential, continuous, and analogous to common human experience, and that lie open to understanding, explanation, and application by and to rational minds? (3) Finally, interest may be directed to the relation of the resurrection to basic, though perhaps optional, philosophical and religious axioms that create, presuppose, or

<sup>42</sup> An excellent short study on sanctification is E. Gaugler, *Die Heiligung* (Berne, 1948). For a longer treatment, see K. Stalder, *Das Werk des Geistes in der Heiligung bei Paulus* (Zürich, 1962).

avow certain convictions concerning afterlife or eternal life of man's noblest part.

The following results may be enumerated.

1. The relation of resurrection to the subject matters, methods, and goals of *natural science*—of physics, chemistry, physiology, biology, medicine—still lacks positive and persuasive description. Theologians may bend backward to recommend or to sell resurrection to people who are impressed by the methods and achievements of Newtonian or more recent natural science. Yet neither a general practitioner, nor a theoretical physicist, nor a chemical engineer will be inclined to accept such reasoning. However deeply apologetic theologians attempt to penetrate the cavernous ocean of the natural sciences, they cannot do more than tread water, for their painfully acquired knowledge will hardly convince a natural scientist of the reality or possibility of Jesus Christ's resurrection. The scientists' experiences with people and with death, and their discoveries made in laboratories or by the help of computers, cannot be appealed to in order to confirm the mystery. A theologian who walks on the broad street of apologetics is doomed to ridicule rather than predestined for commendable results.

Among the biblical writers, Luke was perhaps a physician. Many of his interpreters felt constrained to observe apologetic tendencies apparent in his writings. But precisely if these theories about Luke's occupation and intention should be true, it is noteworthy that he omits any attempt to prove scientifically the reality of the resurrection. Even what he (and the Fourth Gospel) says on the bodily contact, and on the meals held in the company of the risen Christ, cannot be considered an attempt to demonstrate the factual possibility of the resurrection; rather, Luke's observations point to an amazing physical aspect of the resurrection and, probably, to the institution and meaning of the church's meal of communion.

2. The relation of resurrection to historical events and developments, and to *rational and critical research in the field of history* is beset with similar difficulties.<sup>11</sup>

a) Is the resurrection of Jesus Christ to be accepted as a *fact*? Long before the dawn of the era of Western Enlightenment, and long before tools and criteria of scholarly historiography were devised, it was commonplace among Greeks and Romans and other peoples that "dead people do not rise," that faith in an afterlife was a highly dubious assumption. The idea of bodily resurrection was repellent to that ancient stream of thought and imagination which looked forward to a happy riddance from the obnoxious, mortal body.<sup>43</sup> Though Ernst Troeltsch's criteria of historicity,<sup>44</sup> that is, the individuality, the ideological value, and the connection of a given event with other events by the bond of continuity, causality, and analogy, had not yet been anticipated, antique historical reasoning was enlightened enough not to swallow tales of resurrected gods or heroes as literal truth. All the more, the modern sociologist or anthropologist has still to be found who would dare number resurrection among his scientific data and facts! Although recently a revolt has been announced against the dictatorship of historical rationalism,<sup>12</sup> those voices<sup>45</sup> that relegate resurrection to the realm of myth or symbol are much more readily heard.

It seems indeed that with neither older nor newer means of historical research can the naked fact of the resurrection be "proved." Even if we added up the arguments Origen marshaled against the attacks by Celsus on the verity of Jesus' resurrection,<sup>13</sup> or those reasons that conservative scholars promote against modern criticism of the G. E. Lessing type,<sup>46</sup> what good would be achieved? Troeltsch's conception of historicity is as much a matter of nineteenth-century faith as the biblical concept of *dabar* (word, event) is a matter of biblical faith. Faith stands against faith on either side; unbelief is matched by unbelief in each camp. The

<sup>43</sup> In I Cor. 15:13, 32; Acts 17:18, 32, people who deny resurrection are apostrophized. E. Rohde, *Psyche* (Tübingen, 1910), II, 393 ff., has collected some critical, if not cynical, Greek utterances against the idea of an afterlife.

<sup>44</sup> Found in *Gesammelte Schriften* (Tübingen, 1930, 1932) II, 673 ff., 729 ff.; III, 83 ff., 111 ff.

<sup>45</sup> Such as R. Bultmann's and P. Tillich's.

<sup>46</sup> See Lessing, *Fragmente eines Ungenannten* [1774-78]; on the opposite side, W. C. Robinson, "The Bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ," *Theol. Zts.* XIII (Basel, 1957), 81 ff.



Roman Catholic and the conservative or evangelical Protestant Christian will not believe in the jurisdiction and dictatorial power of the nineteenth-century historian's reasoning; the critical mind of the so-called modern man will not trust the affirmations made by a supposedly outdated community of believers. It is necessary to state that the arguments proffered to disprove the historicity of the resurrection are at least as dogmatically prejudiced and as fallible as the arguments to the contrary. For example, how can Rudolf Bultmann prove that on Easter morning nothing else happened, or was given by God, but the birth of Easter faith in some disciples?<sup>47</sup> Faced with this situation, it may be best to give the search for proofs, pro and con, of a naked fact of resurrection a good rest, and to study, instead, the contents and intention of the resurrection texts as they stand. Still, historical critical research can also proceed on a more subtle line of argument.

b) The labors of the *history-of-religion school* appeared to provide material enough to show the origin and meaning of the biblical resurrection stories. The myths and cults of heroes, finally the Gnostic myth of the descending and ascending messenger of the heavenly world formed an environment within which it did not seem difficult to explain and evaluate the biblical utterances on resurrection. No longer was the question posed whether the resurrection of Christ might actually have happened, but the problem of the origins, the development, the use and the place of the religious idea of resurrection was studied.<sup>48</sup> That it is a widespread symbol; that mythical tales describe it; that it is recited in holy formulae and in cultic setting; that it is experienced by special communities; that it meets and expresses a conscious or subconscious human need or yearning—in brief, that it is an

<sup>47</sup> "Neues Testament und Mythologie," in H. W. Bartsch, *Kerygma und Mythos* (Hamburg, 1948), I, 50–51; Eng. trans.: *Kerygma and Myth* (London, 1953).

<sup>48</sup> S. V. McCasland, *The Resurrection of Jesus* (New York, 1937); M. Goguel, *La foi à la résurrection* (Paris, 1933); E. Hirsch, *Auferstehungsgeschichten*, 1940; R. Bultmann, *Das Urchristentum im Rahmen der antiken Religionen* (Zürich, 1949), Eng. trans.: *Primitive Christianity* (London and New York, 1956), cf. *Theologie* (Tübingen, 1953), pp. 162 ff., 287 ff., are among the classics to be mentioned at this place.

almost indispensable factor in man's religious thought and life was now solidly established. Only a frivolous hand could further attempt to remove it from the essentials of the Christian religion.

Thus, where formerly a historical-critical research looking for the bare facts had ended with a more or less outspoken No, there the history-of-religion school said decidedly, Yes! It had, so it was believed, succeeded in "understanding the meaning of resurrection."

However, the affirmation of the idea, cultus, and experience of resurrection exacted a heavy price. Had not such a rash procedure resulted in the equation of the event of Jesus Christ's resurrection with a resurrection idea or symbol; had not the records of Jesus Christ's resurrection been explained as following the same development and growth as antique myths and timeless fairy tales; had not the assembly of the Christians for preaching and communion been identified with the celebration of a sort of mystery cultus; had not their faith and testimony been explained as the reception and communication of a relatively easily available "religious experience" whose source and criteria were supposedly lying in the needs and potentials of the human psyche—had these and other conditions not been fulfilled, the resurrection would never have been salvaged from the onrush of a purely fact-oriented, naturalistic, and historical criticism. The great price was paid and is still being paid. The resurrection thus saved has now to be interpreted according to the hermeneutical, sociological, and psychological rules that seem proper for the treatment of a myth, a symbol, a factor of religious cultus and human need.

The climax and necessary result of the embedding of resurrection within general (history of) religion is the previously mentioned demythologizing which is the modern form of allegorical interpretation of sacred texts. By allegorization or demythologizing, the concrete content of a text is no longer *eliminated*—as was done by a purely historical and rationalistic criticism—as unbelievable or unbecoming. Rather, it is so *interpreted* that the obstacles and scandals offered by the narrated concrete events of past time, or of the heavenly realm, are declared a pure matter of form, which is not essentially and inseparably linked with the



real intention and content of a story. What then is considered the real content? The challenge extended by the narrative to the person and existence of ancient as well as modern man! No longer is it assumed that in the remote past, or high above man's head, a saving history took place whose specific events are piece by piece of immediate importance for the man of all times. But it is held that only that which goes on in the man who understands the meaning of the old tale, and who in its light gains a new understanding of himself, is of saving historical character.<sup>49</sup> Thus it appears that nothing objective is left in or to the resurrection. The resurrection has now been converted into *la foi à la résurrection*, the idea of resurrection, or the meaning of resurrection. And it has become a symbol, a cultus center, and a means whereby man discovers and becomes a better ("authentic") self. Lost is the majesty of a mighty deed of God, which in time and eternity resists being "understood" or degraded to the status of a handy tool of man's self-perfection.<sup>14</sup>

The presupposition with which the history-of-religion school has been working, and with which demythologizing is carried through, is too shaky to demand emulation. As in Old Testament research Pan-Babylonism had its day, so among New Testament scholars the fixed idea that there was one pattern of death and rebirth among the gods or cult heroes, one clear-cut model of mystery cultus, or one pre-Christian Gnostic myth—all of which were, or might have been, taken up by several New Testament authors—is yielding to the admission that up until now too little is known and too much was artificially constructed and wishfully dated to produce enlightening "parallels."<sup>50</sup> Careful reading of

<sup>49</sup> See R. Bultmann, *Neues Testament und Mythologie*; also *The Presence of Eternity* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1957); and the even more radical S. N. Ogden, *Christ Without Myth* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1961).

<sup>50</sup> Th. Gaster, *The New Golden Bough* (New York, 1959), pp. 283 ff., esp. pp. 390 ff., has shown how many unsolved problems beset the talk of dying and rising gods. G. Wagner, *Das religionsgeschichtliche Problem von Röm. 6:1-11* (Zürich, 1962), and long before him, C. Clemen, *Religionsgeschichtliche Erklärung des Neuen Testaments* (Giessen, 1909), reveal how rash was the assumption that the essential features of Christian worship are nothing better and nothing else than a poor imitation of mystery cults of the Hellenis-



New Testament witness to the resurrection makes it doubtful whether terms chosen from the history of religion or from aesthetics (such as "myth" and "symbol," "mythological" and "symbolical") have been properly applied to the contents of the respective biblical texts and to their interpretation. If it is far from certain that mythic-cultic patterns underlie the New Testament witness, then the demythologizing of the New Testament witness is all the less a historically justifiable and theologically necessary program. For demything presupposes that there is a myth.

But again, historical research in matters of resurrection is not yet exhausted—even if the search for facts or for a general "religious" understanding and interpretation should fail to come to a good end.

c) Because of the obvious and necessary impasses of all quests into what lies behind or beside the testimony given by believers, *form-critical and traditio-historical criticism* of the last decades has envisaged and embraced a more humble task.<sup>15</sup> No longer is it asked whether it can be proved that the resurrection of the crucified actually took place. But attempts are made to trace and tell the history of the different traditions of faithful men's testimonies which carry and express the message of the resurrection. It is now asked: How did faith accept, and how did it speak of the resurrection? What is its earliest form of expression, and what use and misuse does it make of the potentials inherent in the call, "He is risen indeed"?

No small thing is asserted when it is held and demonstrated that either in, or for, or by the faith of some believers, Jesus Christ had risen and been proved alive and present after his death. The problem posed to scholarly inquiry is, then, not a critical testing *whether* and *why* faith in the resurrection may be true to facts or to the general religious nature and need of man. Rather, the scholarly inquiry concentrates on *how* the faith in the resur-

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tic era. G. Quispel, "The Jung Codex and Its Significance," in F. L. Cross (ed.), *The Jung Codex* (London, 1955), pp. 62 ff., 78, disputes the assumption that Gnosis and the so-called Gnostic myth are in main elements pre-Christian; he explains Gnosticism as a mixture composed of middle-Platonic, heterodox (apocalyptic) Jewish, and Christian elements. Cf. also C. Colpe, *Die religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, I (Göttingen, 1961).

rection grew, and which processes took place in the proclamation, narration, interpretation, and celebration of the risen Lord.<sup>51</sup>

Though no agreement on most basic issues has yet been reached, harmony prevails in methodological regard. The tradition underlying a given text is sharply distinguished from the interpretations which were superimposed by congregations and authors. The decisive role of preaching, of worship, of the witness, and the community of faith is no longer neglected. We are informed that the older and purer a New Testament reference to the resurrection and appearance is, the less do its style and contents resemble mythical tales, apocryphal accounts, and contradictory legends.

The standard by which the original and antique is judged, and by which accretions to the oldest tradition are singled out and divested of superior authority, is usually found in Mark 16:7 and in I Corinthians 15:3 ff. "Go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you." "First and foremost, I handed on to you (the facts) which had been imparted to me: that Christ died for our sins, in accordance with the Scriptures; that he was buried; that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures; and that he appeared to Cephas and afterward to the Twelve. Then he appeared to . . ." In these texts the references to the resurrection are supposedly bare of legendary adornments, strictly eschatological, and directly related to (the witness of) faith. And the stories of Paul's con-

<sup>51</sup> Among the many relevant monographs and essays we mention: L. Brun, *Die Auferstehung Christi in der urchristlichen Überlieferung* (Giessen, 1925); Jack Finegan, *Die Überlieferung der Leidens- und Auferstehungsgeschichte Jesu* (Giessen, 1934); E. Lohmeyer, *Galilea und Jerusalem* (Göttingen, 1936); A. N. Wilder, "Variant Traditions on the Resurrection in Acts," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXII (1943), 307 ff.; E. Bammel, on I Cor. 15:3 ff., in *Theol. Zts.*, XI (Basel, 1955), 401 ff.; C. H. Dodd, "The Appearances of the Risen Christ," in Nineham (ed.), *Studies in the Gospels, In Memory of R. H. Lightfoot* (Oxford, 1957), pp. 9 ff.; C. F. D. Moule, "The Post-Resurrection Appearances," *New Testament Studies*, IV (1957), 58 ff.; H. Grass, *Ostergeschehen und Osterberichte* (Göttingen, 1956); R. Fuller, "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ," *Biblical Research*, IV (Chicago, 1960), 8 ff. A convenient summary and a sharp criticism of M. Goguel's, E. Hirsch's, P. Althaus', W. Michaelis' books on resurrection was written by W. G. Kümmel: "Das Urchristentum: III, Die Geschichte der Urkirche," *Theol. Rundschau*, NF 17 (1948), 3 ff.



version, or of Peter's re-establishment into disciple- or apostle-ship, seem to offer enough psychological clues to explain how it came about that appearances and words of the resurrected began to play so dominant a part in the Easter narratives and in the Christian congregations.

Since the form-critical and traditio-historical school has far from reached its culmination, it is impossible to define what its contribution to our understanding of the resurrection will finally be. It appears to keep in much closer touch with the content and intention of the New Testament records and teachings on the resurrection than other sorts of historical research do. For, rather than criticize the verity of the biblical statements, or mix them under the mass of myths and legends and cults of dying and rising deities, it accepts and treats the New Testament as an expression of faith in Jesus Christ and as a collection of many "forms" of preaching and teaching.

It may be possible that one day these different forms will no longer be studied only for their own sake and for an interest in past history. They might be taken seriously as precedents which are able to inform and direct modern teachers and preachers, showing how they might wisely, daringly, faithfully, and yet in contemporary language, render testimony to the resurrection and its relevance. However, signs of such application of form-critical studies are hardly noticeable. Instead, form criticism has created the impression that in regard to the content of faith, even to the resurrection itself, nothing is left to modern man but a noble and, as it were, detached skepticism. What is left standing as a "fact" is the faith in, and the confession of, the resurrection. It is thus acknowledged that the resurrection itself escapes the grip of historical research and its methods of verification.

Since the mysterious intervention of God himself cannot be proved but only believed, this latest form of historical research respects a limit which will certainly never be transcended as long as man "walks in faith, not in sight" (II Cor. 5:7). But a danger of the scholarly concentration upon faith and its manifestations needs also be pointed out: The concern in faith alone may lead to the assumption that ultimately man is to have faith in faith,



and that faith itself (rather than the crucified and risen Jesus Christ upon whom it relies) justifies a man and makes right what is wrong in individual and social life.<sup>52</sup> The resulting "fideism" cannot, however, become a special subject matter of the present inquiry into the resurrection itself.

Still one other approach to the mystery of the resurrection has to be mentioned:

3. A possible relationship between resurrection and *philosophical belief* appears to open a way toward the vindication, if not of the fact, yet at least of a tolerable and recommendable meaning of resurrection. Not all people, but still those open to religious dimensions of life and thought may be impressed by the connection or equation of resurrection and *immortality of the soul*. A belief in the immortal soul and some species of life in the hereafter is found in East and West, in primitive and highly developed environments.<sup>53</sup> Why should not resurrection be but one specific form in which this widely held and highly respectable belief is promoted? Of course, as much as God's existence, the soul's immortality may lie beyond the grasp of scientific manipulation or calculation. Moreover, it may equally transcend the tools, data, and analyses of anthropologists and historians. And yet even more difficult than the effort to prove it, may be the enterprise of ever finally disproving it. On rational grounds a goodly number of philosophers feel constrained to uphold it.

However the case, resurrection and immortality of the soul

<sup>52</sup> This belief is expressed in exemplary fashion, though in different ways, by G. Ebeling, *Das Wesen des Christlichen Glaubens* (Tübingen, 1959), Eng. trans.: *The Nature of Faith* (London, 1961), and in S. N. Ogden's earlier-mentioned book, *Christ Without Myth*. Cf. the more popularizing presentation of similar ideas by J. A. T. Robinson, *Honest to God* (London, 1963). A careful discussion and criticism of the trend represented by these books is found in H. Gollwitzer, "Die Existenz Gottes im Bekenntnis des Glaubens," *Beitr. z. Ev. Theol.*, XXXIV (München, 1963).

<sup>53</sup> For a survey see G. van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion* (2nd ed.; Tübingen, 1956), pp. 362-381, Eng. trans.: *Religion in Essence and Manifestation* (London, 1938). The Greek ideas of immortality that became most influential in Western history and thought are collected and described *int. al.* by E. Rohde, *Psyche* (Tübingen, 1910), II, 27 ff., 130, 143 ff., 263 ff., 298 ff.; Eng. trans. (London, 1925).

are not the same.<sup>54</sup> The resurrection of which we intend to treat is the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which was from the beginning<sup>55</sup> not a welcome equivalent to the immortal soul of some philosophers, but a laughingstock to both Stoics and Epicureans. By resurrection we understand the bodily resurrection of the one Jesus Christ. Not a Persian or Greek dualism, that is, the tension between the mutually exclusive spiritual and material worlds, or between soul and body, between Ought and Is, or between Being and Becoming, but the Old Testament Hebrew and Jewish concepts of life, election, judgment, kingship, mission, and "reward" form the framework in which the biblical utterances about resurrection are to be seen and understood.

Concerning the various methods of relating and discussing the resurrection, there is no law by which to decide whether one or several of such methods must always lead to unsatisfactory results. If we found reasons to criticize many of those currently used among Bible interpreters, we do not wish to imply that no gains have been made, or may be made, by a temporary journey along their ways. Also, there are still other methods available,

<sup>54</sup> In an Ingersoll Lecture, O. Cullmann has shown how widely different, if not mutually exclusive, are the belief in immortality of the soul and the faith in resurrection. See O. Cullmann, *Immortality of the Soul, or Resurrection of the Dead?* (New York, 1958). Cf. W. Künneth, *Theologie der Auferstehung* (4th ed.; München, 1951), p. 26 ff.; A. T. Nikolainen, *Der Auferstehungsglaube in Der Bibel und ihrer Umwelt*, I (Helsinki, 1944), 62 ff., II (1946), 106 ff. The Symposium on *Unsterblichkeit* (Basel, 1957) containing lectures of N. M. Luyten, A. Portmann, K. Jaspers, and K. Barth presents clearly four different views. M. E. Dahl, *The Resurrection of the Body* (Naperville, 1962, "Studies in Biblical Theology" 36), should open a new discussion of the involved issue; he attempts to demonstrate that even the traditional Christian beliefs in resurrection are still far from true to the actual biblical statements. He exemplifies this by the exegesis of I Cor. 15. Those Christians who hope to be raised with a totally different body, he accuses of a hidden Platonism; those who believe in the perfection and resurrection of the present body are found guilty of a secret Aristotelianism. He demands a biblical exegesis and dogmatic formulation that do more justice to Hebrew anthropology and to the specific traits of religious language than traditional Platonizing or Aristotelianizing interpretation has rendered to the biblical texts. Though the alternative the author offers is still far from clear and convincing, he calls for a radically new research on matters of resurrection of the body.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Acts 17:31-32.

which may look wrong if judged after their preliminary "results," yet which may prove right because they lead to an ever more intensive inquiry into the mystery and power of God's deed. Therefore we conclude that hardly any approach to the resurrection need be completely wrong, or may claim to be infallibly right. Any method chosen has the tendency to prejudice the results of its inquiry. Only those ways are futile that are constructed or followed with the one intention of disregarding the uniqueness and dignity of the event called resurrection in the Bible; of disposing of it without due consideration of its nature and meaning; of treating with basic contempt the different ways in which the Bible reports and preaches the resurrection and its power.

In the following chapters, first some biblical texts relevant to the specific topic of "Resurrection and Righteousness" will be presented. An attempt will then be made to describe why and how Jesus Christ's resurrection is directly related to the forgiveness and justification granted to sinners by a righteous God. In the final chapter, written by a specialist in ethics, some conclusions will be drawn that pertain to the Christian's life in the world of today.



## Chapters and Verses Under Consideration

### I NEW TESTAMENT TEXTS

In the New Testament, certain statements call for special notice. They are presented below, each one followed by comment.

(a) Great is the mystery . . . He was revealed in the flesh and justified in the Spirit (I Tim. 3:16).

This text is part of a confession, or hymn, sung to the praise of Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> As in Philippians 2:6-11; Ephesians 4:9; Romans 10:6 f.; John 3:13, the descent and ascent of Jesus Christ are juxtaposed. And as in Romans 1:3-4; I Peter 3:18 (cf. Mark 14:38; Rom. 7:14, and so forth), the realms, means, or phenomena of flesh and spirit are contrasted.<sup>16</sup> In II Timothy 3, a terminology is used that bears a dualistic, if not Gnostic, flavor. But second-century use or misuse of the terms "flesh" and "spirit" does not prove that I Timothy 3:16 is an adapted Gnostic hymn. The refer-

<sup>1</sup> Or, of God; cf. the variant readings. J. Jeremias, *Das Neue Testament Deutsch* (Göttingen, 1949), IX, 20 ff., has shown that this hymn may be formed after the pattern of Egyptian enthronement hymns. The origin and composition of the texts quoted in Heb. 1:5-13 may be traced to a similar background.

ence to the justification of Jesus Christ takes up Old Testament and later Jewish references to God's judgment. That judgment would hardly have fitted a Gnostic text! Christ's justification before the angels is to be understood, as we shall later show, in the light of those Old Testament passages that treat of the covenant-lawsuit between Yahweh and the world.<sup>2</sup> The monarchy of God and the historical character of his action and revelation are distinctly affirmed when a Jewish term like "justified by God" is employed.

The verb "to justify" may mean to do justice to someone, to give a fair hearing and trial, to pronounce judgment, to put into the right, to pass sentence, to condemn, to punish, to pronounce just, to acquit, to exhibit, or to praise as just.<sup>3</sup> There is no other New Testament passage besides I Timothy 3:16 in which it is explicitly stated that Jesus Christ was justified by God.<sup>17</sup> In this context the term can only mean he was vindicated. In another passage (Rom. 3:4) Paul speaks with the Greek (Septuagint) Psalm 50:6 (= RSV Ps. 51:4) of the justification of God himself. He takes up the prayer "... that thou art justified in thy sentences and victorious in judgment." Scripture passages to be quoted later will reveal to what sort of judgment God himself is submitted.

Since it is likely that the "revelation in the flesh," which I Tim-

<sup>2</sup> Heavenly court meetings are mentioned or described in Ps. 82; Isa. 3:13 ff.; Mic. 6:1-8; Jer. 2:4-13; Isa. 41:21-29; 44:6 ff. Corresponding earthly court scenes are found in I Sam. 22:6-14; Jer. 26; I Kings 21. See H. Gunkel and J. Begrich, *Einleitung in die Psalmen* (Göttingen, 1933) pp. 75, 365 ff.; F. Cross, "The Council of Yahwe in Second Isaiah," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, XII (1953), 274 ff.; H. B. Huffmon, "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXVIII (1959), 285 ff.; H. Boeker, "Anklagereden und Verteidigungsreden im Alten Testament," *Evangel. Theologie*, XX (1960), 398 ff.; W. L. Holladay, "Jeremiah's Lawsuit With God," *Interpretation* 17 (1963), 28 ff.

<sup>3</sup> See Liddell-Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon* and Biblical Word Books; also J. Pedersen, *Israel*, I, II (2nd ed.; London, 1946), 346 ff.; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, "ICC" (London, 1952), pp. 30 f.; C. H. Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks* (London, 1935), pp. 46 ff.; N. H. Snaith, *The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament* (London, 1944), pp. 161 ff.; A. Descamps, *Les justes et la justice* (Louvain-Gembloux, 1950), pp. 273 ff.; H. Küng, *Rechtfertigung* (Einsiedeln, 1957), pp. 206 ff.; N. M. Watson, "Some Observations on the Use of *dikaioo* in the Septuagint," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXIX (1960), 255-266.

othy 3:16 mentions, sums up Jesus' ministry from his birth to his death, the vindication affirmed in the same verse must refer to his resurrection, enthronement, and heavenly rule (cf. I Pet. 3:18). We conclude, the hymn considers the resurrection of Christ a part and means of Jesus Christ's justification by God. As much as in Romans 8:34; Philippians 2:9; Colossians 3:1; Mark 14:62; Matthew 28:18, and in other passages, the resurrection of Christ is not viewed as an event that may be distinguished or separated from his ascension to the right hand of God.<sup>4</sup>

(b) He was delivered for our trespasses and raised for our justification (Rom. 4:25).

Like I Timothy 3:16, this verse may contain a quotation from a hymn or from a liturgical summation of Jesus Christ's work. Does the double-headed stanza say that sin causes death, while justification motivates the resurrection of Christ? Or that the death of Christ is related to (the removal of) sin, while the resurrection is related to (the procurement of) justification? The poetic parallelism displayed in the two halves of Romans 4:25 has led interpreters<sup>5</sup> to question and to deny that there is a specifically close causative or final connection between Christ's death and man's sin on the one side, and between his resurrection and our justification on the other side. It is possible that "the two events jointly were responsible for both consequences."<sup>6</sup> Calvin, however, differentiates when he teaches that by the resurrection the revelation, completion, perfection, and instauration of the atonement procured by the cross is achieved.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> A differentiation between resurrection and ascension is, however, emphatically made in John 20:17; Acts 1:1-11; Mark 16:19; the discussion of this difference does not belong in the scope of this book.

<sup>5</sup> Among them A. Schlatter, *Gottes Gerechtigkeit* (Stuttgart, 1935), p. 173; J. Huby and S. Lyonnet, *St. Paul, Epître aux Romains* (Paris, 1957), p. 178; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (London, 1957), "Black's New Testament Commentaries," p. 100. Cf. D. M. Stanley, "Ad historiam exegeseos Rom. 4:25," *Verbum Domini* (Rome, 1951), pp. 257-74.

<sup>6</sup> Barrett, *loc. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> Corp. Ref., *Calvini Opera*, XLIX p. 87. Similarly, the *Heidelberg Catechism* (Qu. 45) teaches that by his resurrection, Christ makes man a partici-



After many centuries, much more has been written and said about the meaning of Christ's death for forgiveness and justification, and it is necessary that the challenge of Romans 4:25b be heard and respected also. In I Timothy 3:16, it was asserted that Jesus Christ himself was justified by his resurrection. Romans 4:25b affirms that men, too, are justified by the very same event.

(c) If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins (I Cor. 15:17).

It cannot be overlooked how directly this statement corresponds to Romans 4:25b. Not to the death (as in Rom. 6:2, 6-10) but to the resurrection of Christ is here attributed liberation from the dominion of sin. Because of the resurrection the Corinthians are said to be no more "in" their sins. Paul seldom uses the term "forgiveness." In Romans 3:25 and Ephesians 1:7, the blood of Christ is the means of forgiveness. In the context of Romans 4:7 (especially in verses 5, 17, and 24) it is faith in the God who "raises the dead" and "who has raised Jesus" which is reckoned for righteousness. Finally, according to Colossians 2:13-14 and 1:13-14, our trespasses were forgiven when the legal "I.O.U." was nailed to the cross and thereby canceled, and when we were raised with Christ, rescued from the power of the darkness, and given citizenship in the realm of the beloved Son. To the group of those Pauline statements that link forgiveness to the resurrection belongs the sentence, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins" (I Cor. 15:17).

Before Paul makes his statement, he underscores emphatically the appearance of the risen Christ (I Cor. 15:4-8). Should there exist a specifically close connection between this appearance and forgiveness? It is clear that the Gospels and Acts give evidence of that connection; Peter, Thomas, all the disciples, Paul received new life, faith, a commission by no other means than by Jesus

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pant in that righteousness which Christ has acquired by his death. In the most recent Roman Catholic monograph on resurrection, F. X. Durrwell, *The Resurrection* (New York, 1960), Rom. 4:25 is interpreted the same way: "Sin is expiated by that (i.e., Christ's) death, but justice is only conferred following the resurrection" (p. 27).

Christ himself who met them. He alone stopped, convinced, appointed, and equipped them. Without the appearance of him who had been betrayed, denied, doubted, persecuted, killed, these men would have continued "in their sins"; the death of Christ might not have changed their lives. In Galatians 1:12-16; I Corinthians 15:8-10,<sup>8</sup> Paul indicates the same thing: by the appearance and by the revelation of Christ, the apostle was given grace and apostlehood. Obviously he does not know of any sort of forgiveness which would give strength and direction to lead a new life—except on the basis of the self-manifestation of the risen Jesus Christ. What he knows of Peter, of James, of the Twelve, of himself, this he appears to generalize in I Corinthians 15:17. No resurrection—no forgiveness, no new life! But Christ's resurrection means co-resurrection for many, the end of the old, and guarantee and community for the new life.

(d) God . . . raised Jesus. . . . He exalted him by (or, at?) his right hand in order to give Israel repentance and forgiveness of sins (Acts 5:30-31).

This one quotation from Acts is exemplary of the teaching of the whole Book of Acts in regard to the relationship between resurrection and forgiveness, or salvation.<sup>9</sup> In the sermons contained in Acts (with the notable exceptions of Philip's conversation with the Eunuch, Acts 8:30-35, and of Paul's speech to the elders in Miletus, 20:28), Jesus Christ's death is denoted as a crime and judicial murder rather than as the sacrifice of a lamb for atonement. According to these sermons the resurrection of Christ stops and overpowers the sin of Jesus' murderers—in a fashion that resembles the teaching of Romans 4:25b and I Corinthians 15:17.<sup>18</sup> Now, in recent years, under the influence of Martin Dibelius,<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Also in I Tim. 1:12-16; II Tim. 1:9-10.

<sup>9</sup> See Acts 3:14-26; 4:10-12, 24-30; 10:39-43; 13:37-39.

<sup>10</sup> *Aufsätze zur Apostelgeschichte* (Göttingen, 1951), Eng. trans.: *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (New York, 1956). Among the recent essays and books discussing Dibelius' view we mention P. Vielhauer, "Zum Paulinismus der Apostelgeschichte," *Evang. Theol.*, X (1950-51), 1 ff.; Bo Reicke, "A Synopsis of Early Christian Preaching," in *The Root of the Vine* (New York, 1953), pp. 138 ff.; B. Gärtner, *The Areopagus—Speech and Natural Theology*

rigorous attacks have been leveled against the authenticity of the sermons and speeches reproduced by Luke in Acts. They were suspected or "proved" to contain and to express more of Luke's—that is, of "early Roman Catholic"—notions of theology, mission, and faith than of Peter's, the early church's, or Paul's actual theology. However, the basic harmony between Paul's and the early church's preaching<sup>11</sup> need not be questioned in at least one regard: the death and resurrection were preached and interpreted as the basic deed of God by which forgiveness was granted not only to the apostles, but to many others also. In the next chapter we shall attempt to explain why eyewitnesses of the risen Lord, as well as other people, were called beneficiaries of the resurrection.

(e) Through the resurrection of Christ . . . we have been born again to a living hope (I Pet. 1:3).

Nothing is missing in I Peter to show that Jesus Christ's death was the sacrifice of a lamb, that is, of the righteous one, for the sin of unrighteous men.<sup>12</sup> But the actual rebirth to new life and "good conduct" is attributed to the resurrection. The "prayer (or: application, pledge, covenant?) for a good conscience" is said to be the essence of baptism.<sup>19</sup> This prayer is made "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 3:21). We note that in Paul's teaching, baptism was related much more closely to Christ's death than to his resurrection. "We are buried with Christ through baptism in his death" (Rom. 6:4).<sup>13</sup> Paul does not speak of baptism into Christ's resurrection. But for him, as for I Peter, Christ's

(Act. Sem. Neot. Ups. 21), Uppsala, 1955; E. Schweizer, "Zu den Reden der Apostelgeschichte," *Theol. Zts.*, XIII (Basel, 1957), 1 ff.; U. Wilckens, *Die Missionsreden der Apostelgeschichte* (Neukirchen, 1960).

<sup>11</sup> Whose classical, modern manifesto is still C. H. Dodd's *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Development* (London, 1936).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. I Pet. 1:18–19; 2:4; 3:18.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. I Cor. 1:13; Col. 2:12; cf. Luke 12:50; Mark 10:38–39. In Gal. 3:27 and Eph. 4:5, no special indication is given. I Cor. 12:13 treats as I Cor. 12:3 ff.; Mark 1:8b; Acts 1:5; 11:16 of "baptism with Spirit." Spirit baptism is the abundant and manifest gift of the Spirit by God. In the New Testament this gift is never described as simultaneous with the prayer of water baptism; but it is the presupposition or scope of baptism with water.



resurrection and man's new life are inseparably twined; "that we walk in newness of life" as such who are to be raised like Christ has been raised—this he demands distinctly (Rom. 6:4-5, 11; cf. 8:10). The teaching of I Peter appears also to be harmonious with that of the sermons of Peter as they are recorded in Acts.<sup>14</sup> The resurrection of Christ is proclaimed as that deed of God by which rebirth, hope, renewal, new life was not only offered, but given to man.

In the following texts it will become apparent that man, though he is the main beneficiary of Jesus Christ's resurrection, is not the only creature affected by it.

(f) Christ Jesus emptied himself . . . and became obedient . . . even to death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed upon him the name that is above every name . . . that every knee should bow . . . and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:7-11).

In this hymn, the exaltation of Christ by his resurrection and enthronement is, just as in I Timothy 3:16, but less explicitly, described as an act of God's righteousness by which the servant of God is vindicated. "Therefore God . . . exalted him." In addition, by his exaltation from humiliation and death on the cross, the Son is given a political and legal position which calls for the prostration and acclamation of all men, angels, and demons. All that is created is abased to him; all are to recognize and to applaud his superiority; by his resurrection Jesus receives the name, the position, the right to be universally honored. We observe specifically that according to this passage Christ is not exalted for the benefit of himself or of believers only, but that he is enthroned upon a throne "above all" (cf. Eph. 1:20-22). His resurrection inaugurates a kingship and creates a legal status which concern everybody, whether or not they are pleased with it. In this kingdom only one thing is proper, due, and right—the obedi-

<sup>14</sup> E. Selwyn, *First Epistle of Peter* (London<sup>2</sup>, 1947), pp. 33-36, mentions the most striking parallels.

ence and praise given to him by all. The praising of Christ by all creatures in heaven, on earth, and under the earth does not extol Christ at the expense, but to the glory, of God the Father (cf. Rev. 5:13b).

The hymn of Philippians 2 takes the resurrection of Christ out of the narrow confines of religious belief and of conditioning by human faith. Christ was raised by the faithful God, not by the faith of men. Though the resurrection calls for and will find acknowledgment, it is independent of faith. For God, not faith, has enthroned Christ to God's right hand.<sup>15</sup> However, according to Colossians 2:12, man's co-resurrection with Christ is "through faith," or is identified with faith. By the resurrection of Jesus, this faith and new life are begun and provoked. And the width and depth and relevance of this beginning and energy cannot be overestimated. The church, created by the resurrection and confessing it, is a political factor and a signal to all political powers. To have to deal with the resurrection means to be exposed to God's own and special "power."<sup>16</sup>

We can go so far as to say that the resurrection establishes a universal order and has a universal relevance and actuality.<sup>20</sup> It belongs to the politics of God's kingship, which has neither limits nor end.

In the Book of Revelation, similar statements are made. The resurrection of Christ means that now he "holds the keys" (1:18). The slain lamb who lives is the only person worthy to open the book (Rev. 5), which contains the judgment upon all the world. "Every creature in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and in the sea" gives him praise (Rev. 5:13a). The universalist ring of Philippians 2:9-11 also has a parallel in references in the Gospels and Acts to "all power in heaven and upon earth," to "all nations," to the "end of the aeon" or "of the earth," to all creation."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Rom. 8:34, Acts 2:32-33. Ps. 110:1 speaks of the enthronement of the king by God. This verse is the most frequently quoted Old Testament text found in the New Testament.

<sup>16</sup> Mark 12:24; Rom. 4:17, 21; Phil. 3:10.

<sup>17</sup> Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8. With some hesitation, again the 153 fish caught by the seven disciples according to John 21:11 may be mentioned in this context.

(g) The righteous scepter is the scepter of his kingship. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness (Heb. 1:8, 9).

Other passages of Hebrews depict the humiliated and exalted Jesus Christ as king "after the order of Melchizedek," the "king of righteousness" (7:2). In this letter the resurrection of Jesus is explicitly mentioned but once (13:20). Still, it is made plain that after Jesus' death, God has enthroned his High Priest, higher than any one of the Hasmonean political high priests, and higher even than angels. God addressed Jesus with the most exalted of possible titles, "My Son . . . God . . . Lord" (1:5, 8, 10). Now, by raising his Son so high, God did not take him beyond the dilemmas of right and wrong. But God elevated his Son and made him "king of righteousness," with the explicit purpose "to put all enemies under his footstool" (1:13; cf. 2:8). This priestly king "lives always to make intercession" (7:25).<sup>18</sup> According to these passages, the exaltation of the Son is the vindication of the service of the Son; it is the crowning of his priestly work done for the many; *and* it is the beginning of eternal, unshakable righteous government over all. If Philippians 2:10-11 said that all knees and all tongues owe him honor, then Hebrews adds that this honor is due to the righteous rule and merciful advocacy of Jesus Christ. Those innumerable Old Testament passages which declare it the king's duty to exert and protect righteousness in favor of the poor and needy, or of all the people,<sup>19</sup> are taken up in the quotation from Psalm 45 which is contained in Hebrews 1:8.

(h) Let each person be subject to the governing powers. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of him who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Rom. 8:34; Acts 7:56. The Son of man's standing (rather than sitting) at the right hand of God denotes him as *Parakletes*, i.e., as a pleading attorney or intercessor. See O. Cullmann, *Christologie* (Tübingen, 1957), p. 188 (Eng. trans.: Philadelphia, 1959).

<sup>19</sup> As II Sam. 8:15; II Kings 3; Deut. 17:18-20; Jer. 22:13-17; Isa. 9:7; 11:3-5; 32:1; 16:17; Ps. 72; Prov. 31:8-9.



approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain; he is a servant of God to execute his wrath on the wrongdoer. Therefore one must be subject, not only to avoid wrath but also for the sake of conscience. For the same reason you also pay taxes; for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. Pay all of them their dues . . . taxes . . . revenue . . . respect. . . . Honor to whom honor is due (Rom. 13:1-7).

This text makes no explicit reference to the resurrection of Christ. The history of its interpretation has yielded a harvest of contradictory results.<sup>20</sup> Is the apostle's admonition equal to ethics on a pre-Christian level, and therefore not binding for the pneumatic Christian (Origen); or is it binding because Paul foresaw the Christian state of the Constantinian era (Chrysostom)? Is obedience due to the governing authorities inasmuch only as they prove to be under God and loyal to him (John Knox), or is the civil government a representative of God's left hand and deserving of unrestricted submission (Martin Luther)? Does Romans 13 convey a commandment of special Christian ethics based on *Heilsgeschichte*; or is there developed an ontology of a natural law embodied in the state, whose corollary is a social attitude open to every enlightened man even if he does not believe in God and Jesus Christ? Does Paul give expression to a radical apocalyptic mood that ignores any responsibility for active participation in the resistance against social evil and in the establishment of a better social order; or is he an exponent of compromisers who have given up the hope in the parousia of Christ, and who attempt to make Christianity respectable by being respectable citizens?

More alternatives might be mentioned. Important for our argument, however, is one above all: Is Paul's admonition based on a tradition common to Pharisaic and Sadducean Jews, and to Greco-Roman philosophers and political thinkers who urged their fellow men, upon more or less religious grounds, to be loyal citizens;

<sup>20</sup> K. H. Schelkle, "Staat und Kirche in der patristischen Auslegung von Röm. 13:1-7," *Zts. f. Neutest. Wiss.*, XLIV (1952-53), 223 ff.; and E. Käsemann, "Röm. 13 in unserer Generation," *Zts. Theol. u. Kirche*, LVI (1959), 316 ff., present excellent surveys.

or does Paul refer to a specific event in God's history with man? In most of his arguments, Paul does build upon a specific, mighty act of God. In writing Romans 13, he may well presuppose the same event he often mentions in other contexts: the prostration of all angelic and demonic authorities and powers at the feet of Jesus. This submission was called the purpose and result of his death and resurrection, though "at the present time we do not yet see that all is submitted to him."<sup>21</sup> The last-mentioned interpretation is sometimes called the Christological, or *heilsgeschichtliche*, exposition.<sup>21</sup>

Three exegetical reasons urge us to prefer the Christological-*heilsgeschichtliche* exegesis to any other.

1. The singular of the word *exousia*, which is used in Romans 13:1 for authority and government, may mean freedom, right, capability, realm; in the New Testament and especially in Pauline writings, this term has sometimes nothing to do with angels or demons. But always when Paul employs the *plural* form of this term, he means invisible, heavenly, angelic, or demonic powers that make themselves manifest on earth. And whenever these powers' present or future "order under" (that is, their submission to) God's will is alluded to, this subjection is said to be caused by God's action through the death and/or the resurrection of Christ.<sup>22</sup> In Romans 13:1b, Paul speaks of *powers* (plural!) and of their submission. And in the whole letter to the Romans, Paul does not argue from, or with, an abstract, general sovereignty of God. Also it may well be doubted whether in Romans 1:18 ff., and 2:14-15, he really wanted to appeal to natural revelation and law. What he actually says is this: "The love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord," has made the Son of God more than the revealer only of God's dominion over all: it has made Jesus Christ the victor over the inimical powers and "names" of law, death, flesh, sin, and other potentates. "By his ascent to the heights he leads (them) captive" (Eph. 4:8). It is most likely that the Roman

<sup>21</sup> Col. 1:20; 2:15; Eph. 1:10, 20-23; 4:8; I Cor. 15:25-27; Rom. 8:38-39; Phil. 2:10-11, etc.; cf. I Pet. 3:22; Heb. 1:13; 2:7-8.

<sup>22</sup> In these cases a tacit or explicit reference is made to Pss. 8:6; 110:1.

empire, from the emperors Caligula and Claudius to the smallest tax collector, was reckoned by Paul among those names and powers. The potential or actual, religious or mythical esteem in which they were held is destroyed when it is stated that they are all servants and ministers "under God," or that their submission under Christ's feet will soon be completed and manifested.

2. The ethical exhortation given in Romans 13:1-7 stands under the heading of Romans 12:1-2. "For God's mercies' sake"—these mercies are described in Romans 3:21-11:36—Paul admonishes the Romans fearlessly to discern the will of God, to recognize and to do what is good. To this end they are offered surprising aid. Not only the apostle or other fellow believers, but also people who do not confess (yet) the Name before whom all knees will eventually bow, are ministers of God and God's appointed public servants. When in the (falsely so-called) *Haustafeln*,<sup>23</sup> the Christians are encouraged to submit to each other, but also to husbands, parents, masters who might not have been believers (I Cor. 7:12-16), it is regularly emphasized that in the Lord, because of the Lord, or as to the Lord Christ, such submission is the right and good thing to do. In I Peter 2:13 ff., 18 ff., political and domestic loyal submission appear side by side; Christ's footsteps have to be followed in either domain (2:13, 21). No doubt Paul recommends subjection as the reasonable and decent action to be taken. He reasons not from an order of creation or toward an easy life, but from the humiliation and exaltation of Christ. The analogy between motives and contents of his political and his domestic ethics forbids the establishment of a Christless substructure to his political exhortation.

3. The appeal to the conscience, and the warning of obedience motivated by fear alone (Rom. 13:3-5), have parallels in Ephesians 6:6-7 and I Peter 2:16, 19. "From the heart . . . with good will," that is, enthusiastically, "in awareness of God,"<sup>22</sup> as people

<sup>23</sup> Col. 3:18 ff.; Eph. 5:20 ff.; I Pet. 2:13 ff. K. Weidinger, *Die Haustafeln* (Leipzig, 1928).



that are "freed" and therefore "free"<sup>24</sup> to obey, to suffer, to witness—this way they shall conduct themselves toward lordships and powers above them. They are addressed as "more than conquerors" (Rom. 8:37), not because it is their duty or plight that *they* should subdue principalities and powers. What God has done and is doing through Christ, and in Christ's honor (I Cor. 15:25-26), this they cannot and need not perform. But this is expected of them: that they be not afraid, but rather be of good cheer vis-à-vis good or evil powers. What can powers do to a free man who is willing to suffer for righteousness? It is a public shame for all Christians that Socrates gladly took such a stand,<sup>25</sup> while Christians labor to work out or discover a casuistry which may liberate them from the responsibility to take a free man's stance before the authorities that be. As much as it is, at given occasions, the duty and right to resist satanic laws, machinations, shapes of the state, so also the payment of customs and taxes can only be a witness to God's mercy, and Christ's work, and the Holy Spirit's presence, when it comes from a man who enjoys and uses the freedom of a child of God. The author of Romans 13 has not forgotten what he wrote in Romans 8. His interpreters had better not forget it either. The words "for conscience' sake" mean, in Romans 13:5, as much as "for the power of his resurrection's sake that is above the authorities and that works in you."

The piece of political ethics produced by Paul in Romans 13:1-7 is, in summary, a Christological ethics that takes account of the eschatological situation in which not only the church but the world is placed in the time between the resurrection and the parousia of Christ. Far from being helplessly delivered over to whatever whims and winds and waves arise from principalities and powers, the Christians by their own submission give public testimony of the present and future submission of the principalities and powers to Christ. They do not fear whom they need not fear! They act as free men who are willing and enabled to shoulder responsibilities for the common good. He who knows of the power

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Rom. 6:18, 22; 8:2, 21; Gal. 5:1, 13.

<sup>25</sup> According to Plato's *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phaedo*.

of Christ's resurrection, and of the blessing of participation in his sufferings, will gladly ponder and do *all* that is true, noble, just, and pure.<sup>26</sup>

The eight New Testament passages examined thus far might be augmented by more. But they suffice to show some aspects and dimensions of the resurrection's decisive part in questions of sin, justification, righteousness, and justice. The Holy Spirit's office "to convince of sin, righteousness and judgment" (John 16:7-11) is closely related to the indicated character of the resurrection. It may well be that for *this* reason, the Spirit's mission and outpouring is dependent upon Jesus' resurrection.<sup>27</sup>

## II OLD TESTAMENT MOTIFS

We proceed to the presentation of another group of statements: a selection from those Old Testament portions that are explicitly or implicitly referred to in the New Testament passages dealing with the resurrection.

According to I Corinthians 15:3-4, Christ's resurrection on the third day after his death and burial took place, and it is to be understood "according to the Scripture"—just as his death for us happened "according to the Scripture." When Paul explained the death and the resurrection with references to the Old Testament,<sup>28</sup> he did not introduce a novelty or present a private opinion. Rather, I Corinthians 15:3-4 looks like a quotation of (or from) a Creed of Christians that was formulated and used before Paul was converted. "I delivered to you . . . what I have received." Why did Christian congregations and preachers refer to the Old Testament when they spoke of Jesus' death and resurrection? We have said that there is no reason to assume that they wanted to prove the reality, rationality, or credibility of the resurrection by proof texts or *Weissagungsbeveis*. There must be other inten-

<sup>26</sup> Phil. 2:1-18; 3:10; 4:8-9.

<sup>27</sup> John 7:39; 15:26; 20:22-23.

<sup>28</sup> Or, to those Scriptures that were considered canonical by the rabbis and the party of the Pharisees of his time.

tions! And the contents of the quotations show that there *are* higher purposes.

### Troth for Troth

In the New Testament, allusions are made to such Old Testament passages that describe the way of the Servant of the Lord. Such texts are:

Genesis 15 and 22 — The Genesis stories of Abraham, the "Servant of God,"<sup>29</sup> who believes in the promising God, and is ready to offer his son as a sacrifice.

Psalms 22 — This Psalm is quoted from the first words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," over the description of details of the servant's wretchedness, to the words, "In the midst of the congregation I will praise thee," and beyond.

Psalms 16:10 ff. — "Thou dost not . . . let thy godly one see the Pit. . . ."

Psalms 34:15, 20 — "The eyes of the Lord are (turned) toward the righteous. . . . Not one of his bones is broken. . . ."<sup>30</sup>

Psalms 8:5 ff. (LXX) — "Thou didst make him for a little while lower than the angels; thou hast crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection to his feet."

Psalms 118:22 ff. — "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief corner stone. . . . This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Save us, we beseech thee, O Lord."

Especially frequent references or allusions are made to the most famous among the Servant-songs, to Isaiah 53. Elements of almost each verse of Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12 appear in the New Testament.<sup>31</sup>

Common to the different hymns of (or about) the Lord's Servant is the admiring, jubilant, public praise which is given to God. The reason for this praise is a deed of God by which he made

<sup>29</sup> Exod. 32:13; Deut. 9:27; Ps. 105:6; cf. Isa. 41:8.

<sup>30</sup> C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (New York, 1953), pp. 98 f., finds references to this psalm *int. al.* in John 19:36. In this verse the author of the Fourth Gospel identifies Jesus with the sufferer and servant of Ps. 34 and Zech. 12, rather than with the Passover lamb of Exod. 12.

<sup>31</sup> Dodd, *ibid.*, pp. 92-94, lists the occurrences.



manifest that he has not forsaken his laboring child or slave. To such a deed the singers look back; and that a similar deed will again be performed—in this they trust. To quote some typical Old Testament texts: “He who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me?” (Isa. 50:8) “Sheol cannot thank thee, death cannot praise thee. . . . The living, the living, he thanks thee as I do this day. . . . The Lord will save me” (Isa. 38:18–20). God proves faithful by the salvation from death. Saved or restored is the life of that man whom God has elected, called, appointed, and who fell into the midst of raging enemies and roaring beasts (Pss. 22; 35; Jonah 2; etc.). May they roar at him, reject, discredit, blame, beat, and ridicule him. May they torture him however they like; may his own heart tremble like leaves in the wind; may the blood of the faithful be poured out like water on sand; may his bones be dried up under the heat of wounds, disease, scoffing—God is yet faithful to him. After the servant was ill-treated among men and by men, he is (or is to be) vindicated by God. So his work and labor are not in vain, he is given rich reward and numerous offspring by God himself. Because God is faithful, he redeems and exalts his servant who suffers in his service.

With the rescue and reward of such a servant, who was delivered into death and found himself “God-forsaken” among howling beasts, is identified the resurrection of the crucified Jesus. In the New Testament utterances on the resurrection, we find names of such servants as Abraham, Moses, David; we see that intimate titles—servant, child, son—are given to Jesus; or we observe that the way of Jesus is described in terms chosen from Old Testament passages, as those just quoted or alluded to.<sup>32</sup> One distinction is made clear: Jesus Christ is not only *a* servant, but the epitome and fulfillment of *the* Servant of the Lord. The ministry of the patriarch, the king, the prophet, the “righteous,” of the remnant and of the whole of Israel is completed and summed up in him. The unity of that ministry is now established. According to Luke 24:7, 25–27, 44–47, the crucified and risen Jesus is at one and the

<sup>32</sup> Phil. 2:6–11; Rom. 4:17–25; Heb. 2:6–15; 5:7–10; 11:3–12; Matt. 8:17; 12:18–21; 21:42; Acts 2:22–28; 3:13, 26; 4:11, 27–30; 7:13, 34–37; I Tim. 3:16; I Pet. 2:7–8, etc.

same time the interpreter *and* the contents of what is written in the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. One of the many meanings of the term "fulfill" goes far beyond establishing an analogy between earlier words (of prediction, description, or command), and later events of deeds; fulfillment is perfection and comprehension, the summing up under one head.<sup>33</sup>

What is, and what means the resurrection, when it is understood in the light of Old Testament texts? It is an act of vindication which was performed by God, and which could be performed by God only! If it was such an act of God, then it was not an arbitrary, wanton event which might reflect the spontaneity or contingency of all historical events.<sup>23</sup> "Therefore God exalted him," says (or quotes) Paul in Philippians 2:9. Obviously, Paul considered the resurrection and exaltation of Christ a necessary deed—which was nothing else but natural, orderly, fitting to God's will and plan after the deliverance of the righteous Jesus into the hands of his enemies. Unless God wanted to be untrue to himself and to the promise and commission given to his Servant, he could not forsake his Servant and leave him in the Pit. If after the horrors of Jesus Christ's passion and crucifixion, the God of Abraham, of David, of the Prophets, and of the Psalms was still a living God; if his eternal plan, promise, and oath were to be carried out, then the salvation by the resuscitation of Jesus was a must. We see no reason to credit the early church or some ingenious disciples for having discovered the necessity of this imperative. According to Mark 8:31; Matthew 16:21; Luke 24:24-26, and so on, Jesus himself gave such information to his disciples.

There is a cause and a reason for the resurrection. They are to be found in the relationship between God and his eternal Word—between the Father and the Son. God is faithful to his Son and Servant; in the resurrection he gives public proof of this. And by demonstrating his own faithfulness he also approves and rewards the faith of the Son. The very nature of Father and Son, even their truth, righteousness, and faithfulness to one another, makes the resurrection of the crucified a necessary, logical, beautiful, fitting

<sup>33</sup> As H. Ljungmann, *Das Gesetz erfüllen* (Lund, 1954), esp. pp. 114 ff., has demonstrated in his interpretation of Matt. 5:17 and 3:15.

act. The mutuality of the Father's and the Son's faith and joy in each other is strikingly expressed in the High Priestly Prayer: "I glorified thee upon earth by completing the work thou gavest me to do; and now, Father, glorify thou me" (John 17:4-5).

The exaltation of the servant Christ, however, is not only an inner-trinitarian necessity and event by which the mutual glorification of Father and Son takes place. The proof that God hears his crying child, the gift of rich reward, the demonstration of the servant's faithfulness, the glorification—all these aspects of the resurrection point to the *public* character and meaning of God's vindicating action. Before the world, God does not betray his Son and Servant. By the resurrection, God manifests publicly that he is not an employer who cheats the worker.<sup>34</sup> Had God forsaken his Son, how then would anyone ever trust that he is righteous and faithful? We have to conclude that God publicly vindicates himself and that he proves worthy to be "justified" (Rom. 3:4), to be "praised as just" in the manner exemplified in Revelation 15:3, 16:5, 7; 19:2, by the resurrection of Jesus. The resurrection is an act of righteousness. It is right that Jesus is raised after completing his earthly ministry. It would be wrong if he had not been raised. Here is theodicy! The faithfulness and mercy of God which are revealed by the resurrection are not competitors or alternatives to God's righteousness; they are other names and aspects of his very righteousness (cf. Hos. 2:19-20).

### One for Many

In the New Testament, allusions are made to such scriptural texts as describe the typical, exemplary, representative character of God's dealing with his chosen Servant. In the paradise stories; in the patriarch and Exodus legends; in the historiography dealing with the time of the kings of Israel and Judah; and in Daniel's apocalyptic statement about the appearance of the likeness of a Son of Man—in these passages and elsewhere, all that God prom-

<sup>34</sup> Trust in God's faithfulness rather than in the meritorious character of works is probably the (second) requirement of faith stipulated in Heb. 11:6: "Whoever draws near to God must believe that he is, and he will reward those who seek him."



ises, commands, or does to One man has a character, power, and purpose that impinges upon Many. In resurrection texts, the New Testament writers refer to the following elements of Israel's books of Law, Prophets, and Writings:

Genesis 6-8 — The salvation of the righteous Noah and his kinsmen from the Flood (1 Pet. 3:20-21).

Genesis 15 and 17 — The promise of the birth of Isaac from his aged parents, and the multiplication of Abraham's offspring (Rom. 4:17-25; Heb. 11:11-12).

Genesis 22:18 — The blessing of all tribes of the earth by the one seed of Abraham (Acts 3:25-26; cf. Gal. 3:8,14).

Deuteronomy 18:15, 18 — The raising of a prophet in Israel like to Moses (Acts 3:22-26; cf. Mark 9:7).

Isaiah 7-9 — The birth of a child as a sign of salvation from the time of oppression and lawlessness (Heb. 2:13-14).

Isaiah 11:1 ff.; 42:1 ff.; 48:16; 61:1 ff. — The equipment of a servant with the Spirit of the Lord that he might bring forth justice (Matt. 3:13-17; Luke 4:18-19; Acts 2:33).

Daniel 7:13 ff. — The coming of the Son of man as a signal or symbol of the kingship to be given to the saints and the Most High (Mark 14:62).

In addition, elements are selected from the stories about the judges whom God "raised" for Israel; about the king pleasing to God's heart and chosen by him;<sup>35</sup> about prophets, like Jeremiah and Jonah, who were saved from their enemies to become preachers of repentance to a great number of sinners. In the earlier and later periods of Israel's history, though less frequently in times of the classic prophets,<sup>36</sup> these chosen men were described as charismatics; they owed their authority, power, and representative commission to the gift of God's Spirit. But even when the Spirit is not mentioned, they are depicted or denote themselves as God's spokesmen and agents. All of them were elected and ordained, not for private enjoyment, but for the fulfillment of a public service

<sup>35</sup> Judg. 2:16, 18; 3:9, 15; 1 Sam. 13:14.

<sup>36</sup> As in Hos. 9:7; Mic. 3:8; Zech. 7:12; Isa. 61:1.

or office. What God did to them and by means of them was a signal, introduction, and guarantee of the salvation of Many. They were leaders of Many, first fruits among Many, a sign erected to benefit Many. Little good is done when we call them<sup>37</sup> "corporate personalities." However, they were surely representative persons. In what God does to them, and by what they do and suffer before God, they manifest in exemplary fashion both the power and mercy of God, *and* the misery and salvation of man. It is God who "raises" them to that position.

To the election and commission of Israel's patriarchs, saviors, kings, and prophets is compared the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Several times,<sup>38</sup> Jesus' resurrection is described in terms borrowed from the prophets and judges, from the appointment of David and his promised faithful successor. According to Acts 13:34, the resurrection of Jesus fulfilled God's pledge to show steadfast, uncompromised love for David (Isa. 55:3). In Acts 2:33,<sup>39</sup> the resurrection is a mighty act of God's right hand, performed by the giving of the Spirit to the Son. Through the gift of the Spirit and by God's "raising," he was "made" Lord, Christ, leader, savior, prophet, shepherd. Like the salvation of Jonah after three days, his coming, death, resurrection, and call to repentance are called a sign given by God (Matt. 12:39-41; 16:4). When a man is singled out and commissioned in such a way, God himself takes the liberation of Israel and the salvation even of Gentiles into his hands. When the chosen One is given, and assumes, his office, many are thereby given both a guarantee of God's presence among them, and a representative of themselves before God. The Lord's anointed One is "the breath of our nostrils . . . under his shadow we shall live!" (Lam. 4:20). The representative man will be chastened by God, but God's steadfast love will not be taken from him (cf. II Sam. 7:14-15). The deepest humbling of God and the highest exaltation of man take place in one and the same event. What is done to and by the elect minister of God changes not only one man's status; it changes for good the life of Many. "The

<sup>37</sup> With H. Wh. Robinson and others.

<sup>38</sup> Acts 2:33; 3:22 ff.; 4:27; 5:31; 7:37; 10:42; 13:20-34; Heb. 13:20.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Rom. 1:4; 6:4; 8:11; Acts 5:31; 10:38, etc.

children of thy servants shall dwell secure" (Ps. 102:28). "Behold, a king will reign in righteousness. . . . Then justice will dwell in the wilderness . . . and the effect of righteousness will be peace . . . quietness and trust forever" (Isa. 32:1, 16-17). As One king makes Israel sin, and as One man's transgression brings the ban upon Israel, so One man's righteousness makes the Many to be accounted righteous.<sup>40</sup> "In your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed."<sup>41</sup>

The Old Testament texts which we have been quoting to illustrate the representative office of the One among the Many, show that by his chosen and "raised" Servant, God reveals that he himself is present among men to help them, and that an approach to God is opened to the Many. The ancient Covenant words "I will be your God and you shall be my people," find their fulfillment in the gift and work of the one Servant, whose salvation from death becomes a signal and guarantee for all those poor and needy, and an unmistakable warning to the enemies. Neither the misery of the afflicted, nor the pride of the oppressors will last: for God raised his suffering Servant! Righteousness is the fulfillment of the promises and obligations of the covenant between God and man. Righteousness is restored, and rules, when the man is "raised" who obediently "fulfills all righteousness" (cf. Matt. 3:15).

The same Old Testament texts may also partly explain why some New Testament writers<sup>42</sup> speak of "resurrection with Jesus" or of an analogous result of his resurrection which is already to be enjoyed in the present time, and not only after death. For when the resurrection of the One is understood in the light of Old Testament events, then it is not a privilege granted for but One man's pleasure. We stated before that the raising by God of One man

<sup>40</sup> I Kings 15:26; 16:2; II Sam. 24:15-17; Josh. 7; Isa. 53:11; Rom. 5:12-21; Heb. 2:5-18.

<sup>41</sup> Acts 3:25 takes up Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; cf. Gal. 3:8.

<sup>42</sup> Paul in Rom. 6, in Col., in Eph.; the Fourth Gospel where it speaks of having eternal life now through faith in Christ (esp. 5:21-27; 11:25-26); I Pet. in the reference to our rebirth through Christ's resurrection (1:3; 3:21); Rev. 20 with its distinction of a first (present?) resurrection of the chosen saints, from a later general resurrection.



is always a sign of immediate repentance, forgiveness, salvation, new life for Many. Nobody really speaks of the resuscitation of Christ by God—unless he speaks in the same breath of the salvation from death that has begun for the benefit, the experience, the enjoyment of Many.

In the Gospel accounts of the resurrection, the appearance of Christ always means that chosen men are committed to something new. Their very commission and ministry presupposes that they are made new men. They are forgiven; they are sent out; they are equipped for service. What they will say to Jews and Gentiles will come out of a gift and renewal experienced by themselves. Those who will talk in this manner are existentially involved in Christ's resurrection. No other reference to his resurrection makes sense; if any other is made, then it signifies that the resurrection is a legend, a lie, the result of theft, a thing to be doubted. The co-resurrection of sinners is either included in Christ's resurrection, or else there is no witness, no faith, no reality to his resurrection.

The amazing logic of I Corinthians 15:13, 16, may point in this direction. "If there is no resurrection of the dead, Christ is not raised either. . . . If the dead are not raised, Christ is not raised." This does not mean that a theory or accepted belief of general resurrection is the presupposition of the possibility of Christ's resurrection. But it does indicate that—since "now Christ has been raised from the dead" (15:20)—there is no preaching of, and no faith in his resurrection which makes sense and corresponds to reality, unless it includes certainty of co-resurrection. As Adam stood for the death of all, so Christ stands for the life of all (I Cor. 15:20-22, 44-49). What the Gospel accounts say is affirmed by Paul: The first preachers of Christ's resurrection believed and spoke unanimously as eyewitnesses of the resurrection; that is, as involved and blessed participants in the great event (I Cor. 15:4-8). The same holds true of the Corinthians. They are believers in Christ's resurrection only when their faith in him involves their life—a sober, righteous, stable conduct that may be full of labor, yet is always life and work for the Lord (15:32-33, 58). If the Corinthians do not know this, they may a hundred times affirm

that they believe in his resurrection (15:11)—they are still ignorant of God (15:34); that is, they ignore, despise, belie, fail to enjoy what God has done in raising his Son!

What in I Corinthians 15 is extensively argued, is said more briefly in other passages. The risen Jesus Christ is called the “first-born among many brethren,” the “first-born from the dead,” the “first fruit of those who went to sleep,” the “leader of life,” or the “leader of salvation,” the “final Adam.”<sup>43</sup> His resurrection is identified with the “announcement of light for the people (Israel) and for the Gentiles” (Acts 26:23).

But there are still more groups of Old Testament texts that are relevant to the resurrection.

### Enthronement

Frequent and well known are the quotations from Psalm 110 which are found, except in the Johannine writings, throughout the New Testament. “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool. . . . You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.’”<sup>44</sup> Psalm 110 belongs to a group of texts whose history, form, and contents appear to have a clearly traceable background and place in Israel’s life. The common background of many psalms and prophetic texts may well be found in a yearly, septennial, or occasional covenant festival, on which the manifestation of God’s kingship in the establishment of a solid *earthly* kingship was remembered, proclaimed, and celebrated.<sup>45</sup> The respective group of texts includes II Samuel 7:8 ff.; Psalms 2; 8; 45; 89; 132; Isaiah 9; 11, and perhaps (some of)

<sup>43</sup> Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:18; I Cor. 15:20, 45; Acts 3:15; Heb. 2:10; 12:2.

<sup>44</sup> Mark 12:36; 14:62; Acts 2:34 f.; I Cor. 15:25; Eph. 1:20 f.; Heb. *passim*.

<sup>45</sup> Among the authors who have elaborated the nature of kingship in the Old Testament and in its environment, the names of S. H. Hooke, S. Mowinckel, I. Engnell, G. Widengren, H. Ringgren may be mentioned at this place. H. Riesenfeld, *Jésus transfiguré* (Uppsala, 1947), has drawn from their findings most daring conclusions for the interpretation of the New Testament. The “Scandinavian School” was subject to severe criticism (especially by H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* [Chicago, 1948]; M. Noth, “Gott, König, Volk im Alten Testament,” repr. in *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament*, München [1957], pp. 188 ff.) which has left traces upon S. Mowinckel’s *He That Cometh* (Nashville, 1956).



the Servant-songs and Servant-psalms mentioned earlier. The New Testament quotes with preference the so-called "oracles" of God that are contained within these kingship texts. "Thou art my Son; today I have begotten thee. . . . Sit at my right hand. . . . Thy throne, O God, endures for ever and ever."<sup>46</sup> Indirect references to the kingship psalms may be found in most neotestamental statements about the "kingdom of God."

Now we observe that the royal psalms lay emphasis upon the appointment of the earthly king by God's election, designation, and pronouncement; upon the solidity and duration of his government; upon its foundation on an eternal covenant; upon obedience to God's law; upon the protection and procurement of righteousness and justice for the poor and needy; and upon victory over uproarious foreign nations. The kingship thus described shows many features common to descriptions and pictures of ideal or idealized Egyptian and Mesopotamian rulers. But its institution by the God of Israel (I Sam. 8-12; Hos. 8:4; 13:11), gauging against the law of Moses (Deut. 17:14-20), dependence on fulfillment by a coming Son of David (II Sam. 7), localization in Zion (Isa. 24:23; 28:16), and connection with Jerusalem Temple (Ezek. 45; I Kings 5-9) give it distinctive features.

Some New Testament allusions to the King-psalms are made within accounts of (or references to) the birth, the baptism, the transfiguration of Christ. However, such allusions are most frequent in passages dealing with Christ's resurrection, ascension, and heavenly rule.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Matt. 3:17; Luke 3:22 (D!); Acts 2:30; 13:33; Heb. 1:5, 8-9, 13.

<sup>47</sup> The texts Acts 2:24-36; 13:21-39; Matt. 28:18-20; Phil. 2:9-11; I Cor. 15:25-27; Heb. 1:5-13 are the most outstanding examples of an immediate identification of Christ's resurrection with the enthronement of the king chosen by God over Israel and the nations. In Hebrews, the enthronement (and high-priestly) imagery is predominant; apparently it is considered so lucid and self-explanatory that—except in 13:20—explicit reference to Jesus Christ's resurrection is not made. The exaltation and ascent has taken the place of narration or mentioning of the resurrection. E. Käsemann, *Das Wandern Gottesvolk* (Göttingen<sup>2</sup>, 1957), esp. pp. 42 ff., 153, does not convincingly prove that Gnostic rather than Old Testament elements explain the peculiar imagery, diction, and tendency of this epistle.



By relating the exaltation of Christ to kingship-texts of the Old Testament, several New Testament authors disclose a further aspect of the resurrection. Not only is the resurrection evidence of God's faithfulness; not only is it a sign, guarantee, and means for the salvation of Many; but it is, also, establishment of a solid, legitimate, and promising rule and order of universal validity. The resurrection is the enthronement of Christ. Perhaps for this reason it is usually not separated or distinguished from the ascension.<sup>48</sup> The enthronement of him who died for the sinners and the utterly poor is the guarantee of the care and the right given by God to the poor and the needy. They are granted more than a hearing before God. An effective and powerful advocate is given them—God's beloved Son pleads and acts before God on their behalf.<sup>49</sup> With Isaiah 53:11–12, this advocate is described in I John 2:1 as "righteous." His person is a rock that proves precious to God, reliable to those trusting in it, and catastrophic for all adversaries.<sup>50</sup> "He shall faithfully bring forth justice," and he "turns the judgment into victory" in favor of all oppressed.<sup>51</sup> Were his rule not a rule above all (Eph. 1:20–22), he could not be an effective advocate on behalf of people that are still groaning in their wretched situation under flesh, sin, death. But now his universal kingship is identified with his continuous intercession for the depraved. He is both a mighty and a merciful ruler. In Hebrews the identity of the royal "Son" with the priestly mediator is carefully elaborated. It is Christ's elevation above all enemies and his concern for precisely the poor and needy that give his enthronement by the resurrection universal relevance. The righteousness he executes from his throne is exerted against the powers of evil and for the protection of man. Little wonder that people who heard and believed the news, the "evangel," of this king's ascension felt

<sup>48</sup> Exceptions are John 20:17; Acts 1:1–11; Mark 16:19.

<sup>49</sup> Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; I John 2:1; cf. John 14:16, etc. For a careful study of the different meanings attributed to the "Paraklet," see O. Betz, *Der Paraklet* (Leiden, Köln, 1963).

<sup>50</sup> Ps. 118:22; Isa. 8:14; 28:16 in Acts 4:11; Luke 2:34; Matt. 21:42; I Pet. 2:4–8; cf. Rom. 9:32–33; I Cor. 15:25–27.

<sup>51</sup> Isa. 42:1–4 in Matt. 12:18–21.

enabled and encouraged bravely to stand before, to withstand, *and* to obey the principalities and powers that be.<sup>52</sup>

### God Himself

All Old Testament passages to which reference has been made permit and suggest a regrouping under one single category. The New Testament accounts and reminders of the appearances of Christ resemble Old Testament descriptions of theophanies. In the appearances of God before the patriarchs, Moses, David, the prophets, God does not only communicate his will and plan toward one man or many men; nor does he appear just for the sake of the appointment and equipment of servants chosen to represent his will for the people, or to intercede for them. No doubt, he will *act* according to the covenant (that is, righteously), and he will restore righteousness by a righteous servant. But this is not all. "The holy God shows *himself holy* in righteousness" (Isa. 5:16). God manifests *himself* in his appearances and mighty deeds. He discloses who, and what, and where he is and will be. "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord" who appears (Isa. 6:3).

The same is true of the resurrection. God proves to be *present* after disaster has overtaken his chosen. The "third day" on which the resurrection took place (I Cor. 15:4) may recall Jonah's salvation after three days and three nights (Matt. 12:40), or Israel's restoration to life in which the people trusted (blindly?), according to Hosea (6:2). At any rate, by interfering on the third day (so fast, after just a few days!), God reveals his readiness to save, and his presence in the midst of seemingly hopeless conditions. The references made (in Matt. 12 and 16) to Jonah also show that God is revealed and known to Israel, to his servant—and is to be manifested even to the Gentiles—as "*gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and repenting of evil*" (Jonah 4:2). In the description of God's theophany before Moses (Exod. 33:17-23; 34:5 ff.), and in John 1:14, almost identical words are used in order to describe what self-proclamation of God is made, when God appears to his chosen. "We saw his glory . . . full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). The allusions to the Servant

<sup>52</sup> Eph. 6:10-14; Rom. 13:1 ff.; Rev. 13; I Pet.; Heb. 10:32-39; 12:1-4.



of Isaiah 53 and 42, and to Noah's salvation,<sup>53</sup> connect Jesus' glorification or resurrection with acts by which God manifested his "pleasure" in the work and endurance of his chosen Servant. We can conclude: By the resurrection, God shows that he is pleased with the sacrifice, of which, for example, Isaiah 53:10 and Ephesians 5:2 speak. Further, the remembrance of Isaac's birth from aged parents puts emphasis upon the *power* of God: he calls into being what is not, he is *creator ex nihilo* (Rom. 4:17, 19, 24). The reference to Isaac's offering discloses God as a testor and *vindicator of faith* (Heb. 11:17-19). That God, by the death and resurrection of Christ, manifests himself as *renewer of the broken covenant* may be indicated by the allusions to Ezekiel 37:26 and Isaiah 55:3 that are apparently made in the phrasing of Hebrews 13:20. In short, by the resurrection, God not only reveals what he is *pro me*; he manifests also what he is in himself (*a se*, or, *in se*). If the benefits bestowed by God to men did not flow out of God's very nature, they might be revokable and of little value and trustworthiness. God manifests not only that he "*makes righteous*" but also, and foremost, that "*he is righteous*" (Rom. 3:26).

Unless the resurrection is explained as a deed by which God manifests, distinguishes, and describes *himself*, even his love and power, his holiness and righteousness, his mercy and grace—it is not explained at all. Much mental balking before and against the resurrection may have its roots in the fact that the respective critics are unwilling to let God be God on God's own terms. The God of whom the Old and New Testaments speak is the God who raises the Son. This is what Paul affirms in Romans 4:17, 24: "Abraham believed in God who makes the dead alive," and "We believe in him who raised Jesus from the dead." If we believed not more than that God *can* raise, then eventually resurrection might be stripped away from faith, and faith might supposedly still be faith when it was related to a god who is not active, not caring, not involved, not manifested—a god who is in the last resort unknown and unknowable! Then God would be denied the freedom to make *himself* known by his acts of revelation. If, however, faith is faith in the God who has raised and does raise (Rom. 8:11),

<sup>53</sup> See Phil. 2:6-11; Rom. 4:25; Matt. 3:15-17; 12:18 ff.; I Pet. 3:18-20.



then God's will, power, act of raising are affirmed to be inalienable attributes of God himself. Denial of the resurrection is then denial of God himself and of faith itself. This is stated crisply by A. M. Ramsey when he writes, "Christian theism is resurrection theism."<sup>54</sup>

We have now to turn to the last of the points to be made in this context upon the basis of New Testament references to the Old.

### Proclamation and Remembrance

New Testament writers derive from the Old Testament information about many practical, be they cultic or ethical, consequences of the resurrection. Instead of consequences, modern theological language prefers to speak of existential relevance, or of the *Heilsbedeutung*, for individuals in their private life and for communities in their social life.

The New Testament informs us that men shall be "witnesses" of the resurrection (Acts 1:8, 22, etc.); that they shall "proclaim" it to Many (Mark 13:10, etc.); that they shall "remember" it (I Cor. 11:25; II Tim. 2:8); that they shall live as such that "acknowledge its power" (Phil. 3:10). The term "witness," which plays an outstanding, though slightly different, role in the Johanneine writings, in Luke's two books, and in Hebrews, is most likely taken from Deutero-Isaiah—who in turn takes up the imagery of Yahweh's covenant-lawsuit. Especially the Lucan formulation, "You shall be witnesses unto me,"<sup>55</sup> reflects the appointment of the exiled Israelites to be, for the benefit of the whole world, witnesses to God and his works: "You are my witnesses" (Isa. 43:10, 12; 44:8). "I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind" (Isa. 42:6-7; 49:6).

Alike as Israel, the apostles have to take their stand in the world as eyewitnesses, as convinced and convincing witnesses, as suffering witnesses ("martyrs" in our sense of this word), finally as celebrating witnesses. According to Acts, Jewish and pagan court-rooms, sometimes sanctuaries, more often public places from

<sup>54</sup> *The Resurrection of Christ* (London, 1945), p. 8.

<sup>55</sup> *Martyres*, Acts 1:8; Luke 24:48; cf. Acts 1:22; 2:32; 3:15; 4:33, etc.; Matt. 24:14; John 19:35; 21:24; cf. I John 1:1-4.

Jerusalem to Rome, became the location in which God's case for (not versus) the world is (legally!) attested.

Beside the legal ("witness") metaphors stand some terms that are taken from cultic life. The Old Testament speaks in a pointed sense of "remembering" God's deeds. The call to remember goes far beyond the invitation to strain one's mind for a certain intellectual exercise. God's deeds are remembered when in holy assembly and in personal devotion, in courageous action and in patient suffering, the rule and presence, the power and love of God are acknowledged and made manifest.<sup>56</sup> In this sense, II Timothy 2:8 has to be understood: "Remember Jesus Christ who was raised from the dead." Also Jesus' words spoken at the institution of the Lord's Supper<sup>57</sup> were hardly written down and interpreted to invite to a "*Totengedächtnismahl*." He who obeys the command, "Do this in remembrance of me," celebrates communion with the crucified *and risen Lord*. Such command and celebration is fulfilled in specific thoughts, words, decisions, actions, assemblies, public manifestations—as the slogan, "Remember the Alamo," not only still stirs recollection, but passion, attitude, demonstrations, and, at times, action.

According to the Old and New Testaments, remembrance is renewed, sharpened, stimulated, and crowned by "proclamation." When the New Testament shows that the resurrection is and shall be preached,<sup>58</sup> it employs, again, terminology and refers to a means of praise known not only from political life of the Hellenistic cities, but also from the cultus and life of Israel. On or after the "Day" of great liberation wrought by God, it is fitting and necessary and cannot be avoided that his mighty deed be made

<sup>56</sup> Concerning the occurrence and meaning of "remembrance" in the Old and New Testaments, see the essays of N. A. Dahl in *Stud. Theol.* (1947), pp. 67 ff.; (1948), pp. 86 ff.; G. Jones, *Journal of Theol. St.*, NS 6 (1955), pp. 183 ff.; J. J. Petuchowski, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXVI (1957), 293 ff.; also J. Jeremias, *Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, rev. ed. (Eng. trans.: New York, 1955), pp. 159 ff.; and G. v. Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (München, 1957), I, 241 f.

<sup>57</sup> Luke 22:19; I Cor. 11:25.

<sup>58</sup> Terms as *Kerusein*, *euggelizesthai*, *kataggelein* are preferably used. In Kittel, *Theolog. Wörterbuch*, examples are collected that show the *Sitz im Leben* proper to the terms *herald*, *announce*, *be a messenger of good tidings*.

known to many, so that they may join in joy and jubilation over the life that is saved and the peace that is made (Exod. 15:1 ff.; Isa. 52:7-10; Ps. 22:22-23; Ps. 118:24).

The resurrection day would not be worthy of the name "Day of the Lord," and the resurrection would not deserve to be attested, remembered, and proclaimed, if it were not an event from which man can live, upon which he can stand, in which he can rejoice, for which it is an honor to suffer, according to which he will decide and act, and of which he has something to say to others. Here is even more reason to celebrate than the occasion celebrated by Psalm 118. Here is ground to assemble *en masse*, to go out into the world, to take heart, and to resist whatever denies or distorts the saving righteousness of God. For the resurrection is the final turn of the tide, the crisis and hinge between old and new, the beginning of "new creation." Those who remember and proclaim it, lead a life inspired by the resurrected one. God's life-giving Spirit flows over to them. They are "baptized with Spirit" and become joyful and bold witnesses.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, the resurrection makes it meet, indeed, and just, right and helpful, always and everywhere to give thanks for the manifestation and presence of the living Lord among men.

So much about the possible sense or senses of the phrase, "Christ was raised . . . according to the Scriptures." Three things are equally noteworthy.

1. None of the New Testament writers knows or reproduces a kerygma of Jesus crucified and resurrected in which Jesus' (death and) resurrection is not linked up with the Scriptures. Therefore, it should not be opined or suggested that behind the New Testament witness to Christ's resurrection there may be found a resurrection proclamation that is exclusively based on queer experiences, mere speculation, or deceitful, wishful thinking. We have knowledge of the resurrection only together with the information that it was interpreted "according to the Scriptures."

<sup>59</sup> II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; John 7:38 f.; Acts 2:33; Rom. 8:11, etc.; John 20:20-23; I Cor. 12:13; Acts 1:5; 4:31.



*Ultra posse nemo obligatur.* It is impossible to understand anything of Christ's resurrection, of the event itself and its meaning, when the Old Testament witness to it is stripped away.

2. The resurrected Christ "opens the mind to understand the Scriptures" (Luke 24:45).<sup>60</sup> The New Testament authors did not ascribe to their own scrutiny and ingenuity their understanding and application of Old Testament texts. Rather, they admit that new insights, perspectives, and applications were graciously given to them. The Scriptures alone, apart from Christ and the Spirit, obviously did *not* reveal to them that hidden meaning which Christ disclosed by fulfilling the Scriptures in his death and resurrection. As the Qumran Community needed and revered their Teacher of Righteousness as the God-given hermeneutical guide, and as it received revelation through the Scriptures under his leadership only,<sup>61</sup> so, and even more so, we have reason to believe, the earliest Christians felt bound by an interpretation given to them by their Master.<sup>24</sup> Thus it is impossible to accept and comprehend the Old Testament testimony to Christ unless the lesson given by the resurrection of Christ is taken to heart.

3. From the foregoing two points, it follows that the Old Testament is a legitimate and necessary, not a fantastic, haphazard servant and tool by which to understand and explain what actually happened in and by the resurrection. From the Old Testament premonitions concerning a king or prophet who is "raised by God"; concerning a suffering Servant who is vindicated; concerning an epiphany of God that reveals God himself and that means commissioning of its witness; concerning witnessing, remembering, proclaiming, and celebrating a mighty act of God—from all these precedents it may be learned that Christ's resurrection does not belong to the realm of nature miracles at which people willingly or unwillingly gape. "Why stand there and gape into the

<sup>60</sup> In Luke 4:18 ff.; II Cor. 3:15-17; I Cor. 2:9-16, the Spirit is explicitly denoted as the hermeneutical key for all Scripture exposition.

<sup>61</sup> As O. Betz, *Offenbarung und Schriftforschung in der Qumransekte* (Tübingen, 1960), pp. 15 ff., has convincingly shown.

sky? This Jesus . . . will come . . ." (Acts 1:11). The exaltation of Jesus is to be understood as a mighty, judicially, morally, and cultically decisive historic act of God by which the existence, life, and conduct of people near and far is most drastically affected.

In sum, whoever sees and understands the resurrection in the light of Israel's life, her prophets, and her literature, is being enabled to discern what the resurrection has to do with right and wrong. By binding our interpretation to the same Old Testament to which also the New Testament writers have tied theirs, we bid farewell to the preference given by Rudolf Bultmann and others to a possible connection between resurrection, myth, mystery cults, and Gnostic notions. The explication of the resurrection on the basis of alliances foreign to the mighty deeds and promises of God is not fitting to the gist and explicit statements of biblical records. It has as yet not helped to elucidate any feature of this mystery.

But in listening to both the Old and New Testaments we should be able to describe how the resurrection of Jesus Christ is related to the righting of human wrong.

# Forgiveness by Resurrection

## I A SECRET OF APOSTOLIC PREACHING

The Gospels of Mark, Luke, and Matthew, as well as Acts, were probably written some time after the letters of Paul. They may still contain traces of the earliest type of preaching of the message of Christ crucified and risen. Mark's work looks like an elaboration on such a type of preaching as is summed up in Acts 10:36 ff. In concentrating our attention first upon the Synoptic Gospels, especially on Luke's writings, we make the following observations:

The death of Jesus is narrated, foretold, and referred to in terms that recall the description of the suffering and martyrdom of a righteous servant of God, such as Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, Job, the mysterious Servant of Deutero-Isaiah, and the Maccabees.<sup>1</sup> In the same writings there are also suggestions which invite a sacrificial interpretation of the same death: it is called a ransom; a pouring out of covenant blood for many, for forgiveness; a judgment to remove man's condemnation; a prize of redemption of God's people.<sup>2</sup> But those disciples, Jews and Gentiles, who con-

<sup>1</sup> E. Lohse, *Märtyrer und Gottesknecht* (Göttingen, 1955), attempts to show that the martyr motif was rich and deep enough to make theologians ascribe expiating character to Jesus' death. He relegates to the (inferior) status of cultic formulae those passages that use sacrificial terminology in referring to Christ's death.

<sup>2</sup> Mark 10:45; 14:24, and parallels. In Luke's Gospel the ransom saying is not found; and in the shorter (original?) Lucan description of the Last



trive or contribute by commission and omission, to Jesus' death are described as murderers rather than as dutiful priests. And the execution of Jesus is the last act belonging to a trial before different courts, rather than the highlight of a cultic action and assembly in the Temple, or before an altar (as in Hebrews or Revelation). In turn, the trial of Jesus is presented as a mistrial rather than as lawsuit following due legal process.<sup>3</sup> The death of Jesus is depicted as a catastrophe for Jesus and his followers. "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34) "We had hoped that he was the one who would redeem Israel" (Luke 24:21). Before the background of this character and impression of Jesus' death stand the narrations and reminders of his resurrection.

The resurrection is God's mighty answer to murderous rebels. "You nailed Jesus on (the wood) and did away with him—but just him God has raised . . . for it was impossible that he should be held captive by death. . . . God made him Lord and Christ, precisely this Jesus whom you have crucified."<sup>4</sup> Similar is the gist of the several predictions of Jesus' betrayal, suffering, death, and resurrection.<sup>5</sup> The misdeeds of men against the Son of man meet with failure; the resurrection is stronger than their vice. So the resurrection is the reply of God to the crimes committed against

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Supper a reference to the atoning character of Jesus' blood is not contained. But in Acts 8:32 f.; 20:28, Luke relates that Philip and Paul employed sacrificial language and imagery to describe Jesus' death. For this reason nobody should believe that Luke either fails to know, or ignores, or repudiates, a priestly sacrificial understanding of the cross. Luke's outspoken concern with the Jerusalem Temple and with Jesus' intercession from the cross shows that the priestly character of Jesus' ministry is not bypassed with silence or neglect.

<sup>3</sup> Recent discussions on Jesus' trial are competently summed up and commented upon by J. Blinzler, *Der Prozess Jesu* (Regensburg, 1960). P. Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus* (Berlin, 1961), believes then he can distinguish between the primary sources of information, from which the Gospel writers drew, and the accretions which are due to secondary traditions and the individual Evangelists' various special interests. A result of his inquiry is a relative exculpation of the Jewish authorities of the time of Jesus. Pontius Pilate's and his soldiers' behavior thus become the main cause of all irregularities of Jesus' trial and execution. We will discuss the picture presented by the Acts, rather than Winter's reconstruction.

<sup>4</sup> Acts 2:23-24, 36; cf. 3:14-15; 4:10-11, 25 ff.; 5:30-31; 10:37-40; 13:27-30.

<sup>5</sup> Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34; 14:27-28.

his chosen. This answer is as magnificent as the description of God given in Psalm 2: God sits in heaven and laughs in derision at the silly noise and rebellion which kings and rulers raise against his anointed one. They fail in their enterprise; they are utterly frustrated; their revolt collapses. "I have yet set my king on Zion, my holy hill." So God publicly pronounces his Son king, and he establishes his throne. He does so by a deed that will crush the opponents. "Behold, you scoffers, and wonder—and perish; for I do a deed in your days, a deed which you will never believe if one declares it to you."<sup>6</sup> The resurrection contains a surprising and overwhelming threat. For God makes the rejected stone the corner, or capstone. And this stone is identified with the stone of offense and the rock of stumbling of which Isaiah spoke.<sup>7</sup>

We conclude: By raising Jesus Christ, God confounds and ridicules the sin, the revolt, the foolishness of his adversaries. The resurrection is a slap in the eye of the evildoer, or—in biblical terms—a "cut into the heart" of the murderers (Acts 2:37). The High Priest seems to be completely right when he argues that by their preaching of the murder and resurrection of Christ, the apostles "intend to bring Jesus' blood upon us"! (Acts 5:28) What chance have murderers if precisely the one who was assassinated is raised, and is, in addition, "made judge" over the living and the dead? What if God makes it known that he will bring all his enemies to his court and throw them under his feet?<sup>8</sup> The same resurrection, which we earlier defined as a demonstration of God's faithfulness to his Servant, has devastating results for the enemies of God and of the Servant. It spells inescapable revenge and disaster. The murderers fail to succeed beyond the murder. God answers them in a way that renders their situation and future hopeless.

But now, we have to note a surprising turn that takes place in the same sermons of Acts, and which is also hinted at in the Synoptic Gospels.

In the apostolic speeches delivered according to Luke, the sur-

<sup>6</sup> Hab. 1:5, as quoted in Acts 13:41.

<sup>7</sup> Ps. 118:22; Isa. 8:14; 28:16, in Acts 4:11 (cf. Luke 2:34; Matt. 21:42; I Pet. 2:4-8).

<sup>8</sup> Acts 2:34-36; 10:42; 17:31.



prise occurs just after the murder and resurrection of Jesus have been retold. Instead of following the seemingly logical line of saying, "You have killed Jesus; God raised him; therefore you have no chance; you cannot get away with it; you will be crushed under his heel"; the apostles say, "God . . . raised that Jesus whom you murdered by hanging him on wood. God exalted him by (or, at) his right hand as leader and savior in order to give Israel repentance and forgiveness."<sup>9</sup> Indeed, a surprising revenger or judge is this raised Jesus, of whom the following is said: "Because of him forgiveness of sin is announced . . . through His name each one who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins. . . . Each one who believes in him is justified"; "God commands now all people everywhere to repent . . . giving assurance (or faith; or a pledge) to all by raising Jesus from the dead."<sup>10</sup> And we hear in another sermon that "God raised his child and sent him to bless you in turning each one away from your sins" (Acts 3:26).

What is said in such words about the resurrection is obviously "good news." Repentance and forgiveness are not only offered but "given" by the resurrection of Jesus. It is God himself who "turns away from their sins" those who have killed Jesus.

This understanding of the purpose and power of the resurrection is found not only in Acts. It is not a special *theologumenon* of Luke's, added by him to all oral and written traditions he used for composing his second book. According to all canonical reports on the encounters of the risen Jesus with Peter, Paul, and other disciples and apostles, the eyewitnesses were not only offered repentance, but were made to repent of their former deeds. They were not proposed to consider forgiveness, but granted forgiveness. They were not shown the possibility of a new life, but new life began on the spot. "Henceforth you shall be . . ." (Luke 5:10).<sup>11</sup> On the Damascus road, Paul was not asked to halt and to go in a

<sup>9</sup> Acts 5:30-31; cf. 2:38; 3:19-21.

<sup>10</sup> Acts 10:43; 13:37-39; 17:30-31.

<sup>11</sup> Though in Luke's Gospel the story of the great catch of fish which includes Peter's confession of sin, "I am a sinful man," and his appointment, is not placed after the resurrection (cf. John 21), this encounter of Jesus with a frustrated man throws much light on the power of the resurrection. See, e.g., E. Hirsch, *Auferstehungsgeschichten* (Tübingen, 1940), pp. 35 ff.



new direction; he was stopped and forced to become another man! Thomas is made to confess Jesus his Lord and God. According to Luke 24:47, John 20:23, the risen Jesus charged the eye-witnesses to announce forgiveness. The gift of the Spirit (Luke 24:49, John 20:22) equals that other gift that makes its recipient not only a mouthpiece or detached proclaimer of forgiveness, but a forgiving fellow man. Henceforth a man imploring God for forgiveness will invariably be a man who is granting forgiveness to all debtors. "Forgive us . . . as we forgive" (Matt. 6:12).

So this Spirit achieves more than to provide men with some courage, some facility to deliver public speeches, or some ability to speak in tongues. As it is told of Saul, the designated first king of Israel, the gift of the prophetic Spirit gives another heart to man, makes a new man of him. This man will be recognized at once (be it respectfully or scornfully) by fellow men as something novel. It was promised to Israel that first her representative, but then also the whole people, should be equipped with the Spirit, and thus be renewed and made able and willing to fulfill God's will.<sup>12</sup> Not only Peter in his Pentecostal speech (Acts 2:14-36), but all those New Testament books that present details about the purpose and effect of Jesus Christ's resurrection, affirm that the Spirit or life given to Jesus in his resurrection is also promised and given to Many. "He who raised Jesus Christ from the dead will also make alive your dead bodies through the Spirit" (Rom. 8:11). The resurrection is, for this reason, not to be considered the (providing of the) possibility of new life. It is rather the powerful event by which God grants and makes life begin in "peace."

The pointed and emphatic manner in which, according to John 20:19, 21, 26 and Luke 24:36, the risen Jesus greeted his disciples with the greeting, "Peace," may draw attention to the actual gift and proclamation of new life by the resurrected.<sup>25</sup> Life and peace cannot be separated (Rom. 5 to 8). Further (according to Matt. 28:19) baptism in the name of Father, Son, and Spirit was instituted by the *risen Christ* (cf. Mark 16:15 f.). Why no earlier? If it is at all possible to give an answer, then it would be this: On

<sup>12</sup> I Sam. 10; Isa. 11:2; 32:15-17; 42:1; 61:1 (Jer. 31:31-34; 32:39-40); Ezek. 11:19-20; 36:26-28; 37; 39:29; Joel 2:28-29; Num. 11:25, 29, etc.

the basis of God's completed work only, that is, after the death and resurrection of Christ, it is right to call confidently upon the name of the Lord in order to receive forgiveness and the Spirit. The baptism of John the Baptist was but a foretaste of what was to happen with baptism in the name of Jesus Christ.<sup>13</sup>

It is the New Testament doctrine that instead of revenge, fire, and sword, the resurrection of Christ brings repentance, forgiveness, and faith to both the eyewitnesses of the appearances of the risen Christ and the hearers of their message. The resurrection ushers in a new time, the time of life and peace. It brings a "good spell" to sinful men. The contents, character, and power of the "Gospel" depend on it.

We ask now, how is this possible? How is it explained that the resurrection has precisely this power? Is there any logical order and necessity in the preaching of the earliest Christians, or is their reference to the resurrection simply a paradox? Since faith seeks understanding, we ask: How can we explain that the resurrection of Christ is different from an absurdity? Why is it much more than just another miracle? If an answer to these questions could be given, then we might understand the Pauline statements, "He was raised for our justification" and "If Christ is not raised, your faith is futile, you are still in your sins!"

## II THE EVIDENCE OF THE RAISED VICTIM

In reading Acts, we are confronted with at least two senses of the resurrection. They stand, if not in flat contradiction and with the effect of mutual exclusion, yet in no little tension to one another: The resurrection, this inner-trinitarian and public demonstration of God's faithfulness to his Servant, confounds the upheaval of God's enemies, *and* it gives repentance, forgiveness, and peace to the same enemies! If this duplicity of the resurrection's power is not a jungle of meanings and effects, at least it calls for an attempt to elucidate its sense.

In order to solve this puzzle, it may prove useful to take seri-

<sup>13</sup> Acts 1:5; 2:38; 19:1-6; 22:16 are among the texts that most dramatically illustrate similarity and difference of the earlier and later ritual of baptism.

ously the juridical scenery, occasion, or situation on which, according to Acts, almost all of the apostles' speeches have been delivered, and to give due regard to the juridical sense of the words "to forgive" and "forgiveness."<sup>14</sup> Luke does not speak out as radically as does Paul on use and misuse, on holiness and curse of the Law. But he depicts the early life of the apostles and of the church as a series of events during which the confrontation with courts, judges, and accusations made it necessary that account be given of the faith of the saints. And it appears to be one of his literary devices, if not a historic fact, that time and again the indicted apostles become the prosecutors of those accusing them. "You have murdered!" But still more occurs, according to Luke's reports on the history of the early church. Instead of triumphing in the role of accusers, the apostles conclude their speeches with the proclamation of forgiveness granted to the adversaries of both Jesus Christ and themselves.

Why is the resurrection of Christ an event whose mention fits most properly into a juridical setting and whose power is most appropriately praised, when forgiveness is mentioned in the same breath?

An amazing crime and trial that took place in our time appears to be a suitable illustration that can show what logical connection may exist between crime, due legal process, confession of guilt, forgiveness—and resurrection.<sup>15</sup>

On Wednesday, May 21, 1924, Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb, two well-bred young men of respectable Chicago families, murdered a boy named Bobby Franks. Many months before, the

<sup>14</sup> That *aphesis*, *aphienai* are concepts taken from the realm of law is emphasized by R. Bultmann, Kittel's *TWB*, I, 506–509: "The Old Testament idea that God is the judge is maintained." We add, since the Old Testament cultus, especially the sacrifice, is a legal action instituted to restore and to proclaim the right (covenant!) relationship between God and man, it is not necessary to construe a tension between a cultic character and meaning of forgiveness (prevailing in the Old Testament), and a moral essence of forgiveness (proper to the New Testament's teaching).

<sup>15</sup> The material concerning the case to which we here allude is in *The Amazing Crime and Trial of Leopold and Loeb*, by M. McKernan (New York, 1958). Signet Books, D1469.



murderous friends had decided and carefully planned to commit "the perfect crime." Their intelligence, their studies at the University of Chicago's Law School, and the wealth of their parents seemed to provide the necessary equipment for perfect performance. The victim was chosen at random; he had done them no harm. He was killed in a cruel way, and the body was removed outside the city to a hidden spot. But in swift succession, the body of the child, the fact that murder had been committed, and the two highly suspicious, if not flatly conspicuous, performers of the bloody deed were discovered. Within a short time, all evidence necessary for the trial of the two law students was gathered. There seemed to be no escape from severest judgment. The public and the press were crying for blood and expected the execution of Leopold and Loeb. While still alive, the defendants were practically dead men—if not physically and mentally, yet morally and legally. Their lives were forfeited. In charge of the trial was Judge J. R. Caverly. If he was a righteous and just man, if he followed the law of the land and the dictate of public opinion, there was but one sentence to be anticipated—capital punishment.

We ask: Was there, is there, no way whatsoever, legally and decently, to save the lives of such culprits? We have to consider one way which was actually chosen, and another hypothetical way which could not be taken.

Clarence Darrow was employed as attorney for the defendants. He followed a course which seemed to offer the only chance, though no assurance, of saving the lives of his clients: he persuaded them to plead guilty before the court. Acquaintance with earlier murder trials had taught him that in the great majority of cases, a jury confronted with defendants who, in the face of overwhelming evidence, pleaded "Not guilty" would find a verdict leading to capital punishment—while a judge who was to decide over the punishment of defendants pleading "Guilty" would preferably impose a less severe punishment. Therefore, in order to save their lives, Leopold and Loeb did plead guilty, and the judge himself, not a jury, had to decide on their guilt and punishment.

The plea ("Guilty") which Leopold and Loeb made during the

trial procedures was obviously made not in despair, but with the intention and hope of saving forfeited lives. Such a plea of a guilty man who, precisely by his confession of guilt, hopes to save his life is analogous to an older biblical event which is rarely connected with court actions. According to the Synoptic Gospels, John the Baptist told the people to confess publicly their sins, lest the fire-bringing judge destroy them by his imminent appearance. John's baptism, as much as the later baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, was obviously a confession of sins before both God and man. "Those who acknowledged that God is right were baptized with John's baptism. . . . They were baptized by John in the Jordan river while they confessed their sins" (Luke 7:29; Mark 1:5).<sup>16</sup> The meaning of baptism may well be identified with a plea of "Guilty" made before the court of God himself, in the hope of being graciously forgiven. Baptism is, therefore, properly called "baptism of repentance (applying) for forgiveness" (Mark 1:4).<sup>26</sup>

It need hardly be said that even a full confession by a suspected or proved criminal cannot exert upon the heavenly or earthly judge any legally compelling force to assure that clemency prevail. Neither is confession of crime an extenuating circumstance. However, given certain circumstances, the making of a full confession is all that can be done by those indicted.

The circumstances appeared hopeless when John the Baptist announced that the judgment was at hand; when Leopold and Loeb were tried; and when, after Easter, Jerusalem's priests and rulers were accused of murdering the child of God whom God had raised and made judge. In his time the Baptist called for repentance and confession. In our time Darrow persuaded his two clients to plead guilty. And on the day of Pentecost, the Jews had (according to Acts 2:37-38) to say, to hear, and to do this: "Brethren, what can we do? . . . Repent and be baptized, each one of you!" In neither of these cases could the plea of guilty have been avoided. In the Gospels, John the Baptist is honored as a forerunner of Jesus Christ; his baptism was accepted by Jesus himself and made an ordinance for all who were to be members of the church. Darrow's calculation and counsel proved right; the

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Acts 2:38; I Pet. 3:21.



verdict upon Leopold and Loeb was imprisonment for life, not execution.<sup>27</sup>

But why is repentance and forgiveness announced in the apostles' preaching, even before there has been a plea of guilty?

To answer this question, we have to consider another, though hypothetical, circumstance which might have given the Leopold and Loeb trial an even more revolutionary, and yet legally correct, outcome.

Let us imagine that in those hot days at the end of July, 1924, when the trial was in full course, new witnesses had appeared in court and stated unanimously (though not without slight individual distinctions) that on several occasions they had seen the murdered boy alive—even after his death and burial! Such witnesses certainly did not appear in Chicago. But it need not be absurd to speculate, for at least a moment, about the situation that would have been created. One witness and one story alone would not suffice as evidence. The witnesses would have to give their names; the times and places of their encounters with the resuscitated would be compared and, if possible, confirmed. Questions would be raised about the body, and about the place to which the slain had been removed. Some of the listeners might believe the witnesses; some might not. Some testimonies would seem more suspicious or "legendary" than others.

But if the testimony of such witnesses had been admitted in court and put on the record,<sup>17</sup> "the People's case" against Leopold and Loeb might have taken a dramatic, complete turn. The judge need not forget his law books, yet for the time being he would have to close them and declare something like this: "This is the end of the law, as we received, created, respected, and followed it. Since Bobby Franks is alive, the *corpus* of your delict, Mr. Leopold and Mr. Loeb, no more exists. As his death was your

<sup>17</sup> Not every judge or member of the jury might agree with that retired Illinois judge who, during a private conversation, emphatically affirmed that he would have admitted before the bar the testimony of the (biblical) resurrection witnesses. This ex-judge considered the differences, inconsistencies, nebulous parts of these witnesses' behavior, report, and reliability to be fully in line with the ambiguity displayed by all witnesses appearing in any court, be they eyewitnesses of a traffic accident, or medical and technical experts.



death, so his return to life is the salvation and restoration of your life. What these witnesses have testified removes your necks from the noose. The resurrection of the boy and the witnesses' testimony to it has the power and efficacy to save you. According to the evidence which the State's Attorney was presenting to this court, you are murderers and have to bear the consequences. There are no extenuating circumstances. But faced by the later evidence brought in by the witnesses of Bobby Franks' resurrection, I declare and order your release. You are released . . . go and murder no more, lest worse things befall you."

So much about a hypothetical turn of the case against the "perfect" criminals of Chicago.

One of the meanings of the biblical term "forgiveness" is this: the release or acquittal from punishment pronounced by the judge. The Bible does not pronounce theories on the possible consequences of a slain man's eventual resurrection, but the New Testament presupposes the actual bodily resurrection of the crucified Jesus Christ, and it announces the actual consequences.

The situation in Jerusalem at the time, according to Luke, resembled (not a little) Leopold and Loeb's situation as it was just described. The Jews, their leaders, even Pilate, and the Gentiles are bluntly charged with murder. "You have become murderers . . . of the righteous one," of the "child" of God.<sup>18</sup> The death of Jesus from the hands of men cannot be denied. Into this situation breaks

<sup>18</sup> Acts 7:52; 2:23; 3:13-14; 4:10, 27; 13:27-28; Luke 24:20. In Acts 3:13, 26; 4:27, 30; cf. Matt. 12:18 Jesus, in Isa. 41:8-9; 42:1, 19; 43:10, etc. Israel and the representative Servant are called *pais* (child, or servant). Is this term in the Greek Old Testament and in the New Testament a synonym of *doulos* (servant, slave) and *huios* (son)? It does put more emphasis upon the closeness, belovedness, protection of the servant to his master than *doulos*, and it lays more explicit stress upon the submission of the servant than *huios*. The Wisdom of Solomon (esp. 2:13 ff.; 5:1 ff.) appears to be a link between the Old Testament speech of a servant of God and the New Testament utterances on the Son of God. While among Christians of the first century, *pais* was probably understood to mean servant rather than child, the term occurs since the second century (or since I Clement) as a synonym of son. See the respective articles in Kittel's *TWB*, and the chapters treating of the titles "Son" and "Servant" in O. Cullmann, *Christologie*. The Kittel article "Pais," etc., is accessible in English translation in book form: W. Zimmerli and J. Jeremias, *The Servant of God* (London, 1957).

the statement just quoted, "This Jesus God has raised . . . and we are the witnesses." Little wonder that the eyewitnesses of the risen cannot and will not keep silent! (Acts 4:18-20; 5:28-29) Little wonder that Paul is urged, with his message of crucifixion and resurrection, to hasten as far and as quickly as he can! Little wonder finally, that at many places, disbelief, skepticism, and mockery greet these messengers! Still, if Christ has been raised, then the murderers of Christ have a chance not only for a lesser punishment, but for "release"; indeed, they can be set free for a new life—as it were, for a life from the dead.

We observe that the New Testament concept of "forgiveness" has little or nothing to do with a sentimental or negligent dismissal of a man's misdeed or debt. One of its original meanings is clearly visible in Luke 4:18, where Jesus says, "The Lord . . . sent me to proclaim release to the captives." It is also apparent in Acts 5:38: Gamaliel recommends "release" of the apostles from prison. For this reason the term forgiveness occurs as an equivalent or parallel of the term "redemption."<sup>19</sup> Whenever Jesus Christ is summarily described as bearer of a message to captives, then the "peace" or "salvation" message he brings is probably to be identified with the word of release, that is, of forgiveness.<sup>20</sup>

The release of a captive is valid when it is permitted by a legally constituted authority. It takes a judge to provide a release. If the high person should prove either irresponsible or prejudiced in his decision to release this or that prisoner, the release would be of dubious value. But God has a good cause and has provided the right means to release the murderers of his Son: he has raised his Son from the dead.

Release, we must add, not only has a negative aspect, as, for example, annulment, amnesty, removal of guilt, or escape from punishment would have; it is much more the positive gift of new life. "Go and sin no more!" (John 8:11) It concerns not only some features, deeds, feelings of the imprisoned; it is the liberation of his whole person. *He* is released when his sins are forgiven. The released is given new life; he is made a new man; he

<sup>19</sup> *Apolytrosis*: Rom. 3:24-25; Col. 1:14; Eph. 1:7; cf. Heb. 9:15, 22; or of salvation, Luke 1:77.

<sup>20</sup> See I Pet. 3:19; Eph. 4:8; 2:17; Acts 10:36, 38; Heb. 2:3.



is now a free man. All this is not an eventual corollary or consequence, but the very heart and purpose of release. The resurrection of Jesus reveals in exemplary fashion that God wills and grants new life, not only the destruction of the old one. "As Christ was raised . . . so we, too, shall walk in newness of life. . . . Consider yourselves dead to sin, but alive for God in Christ Jesus. . . . Christ is our life. . . . To me life is Christ. . . . We are raised together with Christ."<sup>21</sup>

If forgiveness is preached exclusively on the basis of Christ's cross and at the expense of his resurrection, then it is easily forgotten that God is righteous in forgiving, that forgiveness is identical with the gift of new life, that there is no justification of the sinner which is not sanctification, too. For this reason, the gift of repentance and forgiveness is related to the resurrection in Acts 5:31, in I Corinthians 15:17, in I Peter 1:3; 3:21-22, and in the Gospel narratives of the resurrection. Peter, Paul, and the Evangelists show unanimously that forgiveness rests upon the new life given to the crucified Jesus after his death, and that forgiveness is identified with the gift of new life by God. The election, the setting apart, the commission and equipment for new life belong to forgiveness. Forgiveness is: to be given Jesus as "leader of life" and "salvation."<sup>22</sup> For good reasons, the Gospels treat of the disciples in terms of those who "follow" Jesus.

Why then do the apostles, according to the Acts of Luke, urge the listeners of the resurrection message to repent, to confess their sins, that is, to plead guilty before God? Obviously not because of some calculation similar to Clarence Darrow's, but because of the resurrection of the murdered Son or Servant of God! Through his resurrection their forfeited lives are saved. In his resurrection lies their new life. May they embrace and enjoy it! To say the same with Paul's words: "God has been reconciling the world in Christ. . . . He entrusted us with the work of reconciliation. . . . Be reconciled with God!" (II Cor. 5:19-20)

Nobody should dare say that man is given or left the liberty to accept or to refuse the new life. A prisoner who is told by a properly authorized person that he is acquitted and given a decent

<sup>21</sup> Rom. 6:4, 11; Col. 3:1-4; Phil. 1:21; Eph. 2:5-6.

<sup>22</sup> Acts 3:15; 5:31; John 10:11, 18; Heb. 2:10; 12:2.



job among fellow men, and who then refuses to praise his judge, to leave his cell and to do good works—such a prisoner does not display any sort of freedom, common sense, or decency. He rejects freedom; he acts as a fool; he remains captive without any hope. Those much-discussed passages of the letter to the Hebrews that exclude a second repentance<sup>23</sup> should, so we believe, not be pressed into the service of church disciplinarians who magnify the unrepeatability of baptism and the mediating character of other sacraments, rather than the greatness of grace. Rather, these texts seem to affirm that, outside the freedom and holiness given through Jesus Christ, there is absolutely no other chance to repent in good hope, to be forgiven with certainty, to be liberated for a free man's life in the community. The sin committed "voluntarily" after the hearing of the good news is described as a new crucifixion and public mockery of Christ that will inherit nothing but condemnation and fire.

The question remains whether or not we have overemphasized the juridical meaning of forgiveness and the trial situation in which, according to Acts, not only the apostles and disciples but also Jews and Gentiles are found. There are certainly unquestionable limits set to the analogy between the Chicago trial and the juridical elements of "release" which appear in the sermons of the Acts. But the Gospels contain words of Jesus that reveal, as plainly as Acts, that there is a direct relationship between trials on earth and God's own court. The witness borne before earthly courts is said to have its correspondence in the witness Christ bears before his Father's throne. What the apostles bind and loose, will be bound and loosed in heaven. Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin and Pilate is much more than a scandalous or negligent mistrial, exemplary of human errancy. In this trial Jesus proves faithful to God and to his ministry, and the ultimate judgment is taken, as the resurrection shows, from man's hands into God's hands.<sup>24</sup> The covenant lawsuits of Yahweh, of which the prophets spoke,<sup>25</sup> give a background to the New Testament's utterances on

<sup>23</sup> Heb. 6:1-8; 10:26-31; 12:15-17.

<sup>24</sup> Matt. 10:18, 32-33; 24:14; 16:19; 18:18; John 20:23; Mark 14:61-62, and parallels; cf. II Tim. 2:12-13; I Tim. 6:12-13.

<sup>25</sup> Respective passages and literature have been listed on page 36, note 2.

witnesses, trials, tests, *dicta*, and verdicts that should not be neglected by the interpreters. It seems, for example, that the appeals made to the witness of heaven and earth, in Acts 14:15-17; 17:24-27, should not be explained by references to alleged parallels in Hellenistic-Jewish missionary literature. The references to the witness of natural events do not betray an inclination or indebtedness of Paul to an apologetic (or "natural") theology. For long before the invention of Stoic and Jewish natural theology, Old Testament legal, prophetic, and hymnic writings asserted that the human witnesses of God (together with their opponents) are confronted with a testimony given by and to God himself through heaven and earth, and through mighty acts that were done "since the creation of the world."<sup>26</sup>

At any rate, Acts (as well as I Peter, see *esp.* 3:15) affirms that it is natural for Christians to consider themselves, and to act as, men who are in court. Though man's courts are different from God's, ultimate meaning and relevance is given to the earthly procedures. Many of the New Testament's decisive terms, as forgiveness and righteousness of God, or justification, refer from earthly courts to God's court. In the courtroom which is not of this world and which yet reaches into this world, God's right is established. We are shown that God's own judgment and righteousness are at stake, even where a human court deals with human affairs. Human trials need, therefore, not only obfuscate, but they may also serve to illustrate or to reflect the way by which God rights what is wrong. For this reason, earthly judges, juries, attorneys, witnesses, and the public are not dismissed from direct responsibility to God. Even their hearings, deliberations, deeds, and *dicta* are in a certain sense "sanctified" by the trials of the prophets, of Jesus, and of the apostles. According to Acts, so-called secular places are, more often than sanctuaries, the proper locations for inspired witness to grace and forgiveness.

It appears necessary to interrupt at this place the narrower exegetical argument and to give an example showing what relevance Christ's resurrection by the heavenly judge has for opinions

<sup>26</sup> See Rom. 1:20; Gen. 8:22; 15:5; Deut. 4:26; 30:19; 31:28; Mic. 6:1 ff.; Isa. 41:25; Jer. 33:20-26; Ps. 89:37; Ps. 19.



and judgments formed by earthly judges and juries.<sup>27</sup> Among the many issues that cry for most intensive and serious study, we select but one—capital punishment.

On the basis of what we have learned so far about the resurrection's relationship to right and wrong, the following needs to be said:

The resurrection of the crucified Christ antiquates and refutes the idea that the legal conviction and punishment of a man be an expiation, payment, or restoration for the misdemeanor or felony he has committed. Man has no right to make his fellow man pay for something for which no man, at any rate, can fully pay, and for which God has already paid by giving his Son. After Jesus Christ has borne the sin of the world, and after God has answered man's revolt by the resurrection of Christ, there is no human judge, jury, or society that may dare treat any individual moral, social, or religious trespass as unforgiven. Of course, many criminal attitudes and crimes are still treated in public opinion, in the law, and in the courts as though there were no forgiveness. However, we do not treat here of statistics and experiences, but of what is right and wrong because of the resurrection, and of what those knowing of the resurrection are led to acknowledge. It is no longer sensible—given the Easter event—to treat evil as though it might eventually overwhelm the world. It can be treated only as a beaten, receding enemy; verdicts and punishments will henceforth be different; and finally, capital punishment must be seen as an absurd barbarism, when God himself releases the murderers of his child. If God grants those murderers repentance and forgiveness, who are we to withhold from anyone the chance to repent, to seek and to find a new life? No Jew or Gentile or Christian would be alive unless God had granted all of them forgiveness for their guilt in the murder of Jesus Christ. We may add, not in vain do statistics prove that capital punishment fails to succeed as a deterrent from crime. It saves no sinner's life; it is

<sup>27</sup> The special issue of the *Oklahoma Law Review* (1959), 12:67, is a promising step in taking up and encouraging the necessary exchange and discussion between lawyers, and also between lawyers and theologians. See also *The Student World*, LIV (Geneva, 1961), No. 4, pp. 341 ff.



an immoral act; it not only denies humanity but it fights God, whose will and power is to save sinners.

Instead of considering punishment as an act of retaliation, or expiation, or warning to others, we are to understand and employ it as a protection. As a child is disciplined out of the certainty that forgiveness overcomes the misdeed and its consequences, so after Calvary and Easter, a criminal has the right given by God to be treated as a man who shall repent and live. In order to attest to this right and this chance, the felon and the community usually need to be protected from the repetition of his crimes. In order to provide for protection from further misdeeds, and to affirm the protection by God, a man found guilty may be barred from society for a certain time and then, step by step, be reintroduced into it. Not always he alone, but his family, his friends, and society must bear in common the hope and cost of such protection. But under no circumstances—even though the mob, the majority, and all masochists may cry for it—may legal punishment, after Calvary and Easter, bear any trace of revenge or retaliation. Man's legal punishment cannot expiate. It cannot create a new man. It can but attest that the prisoner, his family, and society live under the rulership of the risen Lord. So it will correspond to the "discipline and instruction of the Lord" which, according to Ephesians 6:4, parents owe God and their children.<sup>28</sup>

What we have said about the establishment of solid rule by a righteous king whose special task is to protect the poor and needy, is here applied to criminals convicted before earthly courts. The resurrection means no less than that murderous men are put under the protection of God, and entrusted to the faithful stewardship and care of their fellow men. The resurrection is not a mythological absurdity or paradox. It is, instead, a historical, reasonable event that teaches and encourages all men to display reasonable humaneness.

So much for an application of the biblical, especially Luke's, resurrection testimony to contemporary law. We return to bibli-

<sup>28</sup> Cf. K. Barth on punishment, in *Junge Kirche*, XXI (1960), 404 ff.; and Wilber Katz's essay, "Erfüllung des Gesetzes," *Evangelische Theologie*, XXII (1962).

cal exegesis in the narrower sense of this term when we observe: Among the New Testament authors, it is not Luke but Paul whose message is focused, as it seems, almost exclusively (Rom. 1:17) upon the righteousness of God and his power to make right what was and is wrong with man. We hope to show that the soteriology contained in the sermons of Acts may contribute to a better understanding of Paul's message.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> The opinion that the author of Acts misunderstood and misrepresented Paul is loudly expressed in recent German books and essays written by M. Dibelius, Ph. Vielhauer, G. Harbsmeier, H. Conzelmann, E. Haenchen, *et. al.* Their arguments presuppose that the real Paul did not rely (as Luke did so emphatically) on *Heilsgeschichte*, but only on *Christus, das Ende der Geschichte*. The Old Testament context in which Paul sees the explains Jesus Christ is neglected in favor of an existentialist interpretation of the apostle. We hold that Luke was closer to Paul, and was a better interpreter of Paul than those who decry Luke as an early Roman Catholic.

# Justification by Resurrection

## I THE SURPRISE OF GOD'S VERDICT

What Paul calls justification, redemption, or reconciliation is the same powerful event that is described as "forgiveness" in other New Testament books. In Acts 13:38-39, Luke renders a speech of Paul's in such a way that Paul himself identifies forgiveness with justification. "Through this Jesus forgiveness of sins is declared . . . in him each who believes is justified."

While in his letters Paul speaks frequently of "justification by faith" (Rom. 3:22, 28, etc.), he uses but once a most daring and scandalous phrase. He affirms that "God justifies the wicked" (or, "the godless"), and that the faith of him who believes in this God will "be reckoned as righteousness" (Rom. 4:5). We do not intend in this paper to enter a discussion about what is meant by "faith" and "reckoning," when these words are used by Old Testament, Hellenistic-Jewish, rabbinic, or New Testament writers.<sup>1</sup> But we ask as exclusively as possible for the sense of the one surprising statement, "God justifies the wicked," from which the Reformers

<sup>1</sup> H. W. Heidland's *Die Anrechnung des Glaubens zur Gerechtigkeit* (Stuttgart, 1936) and his article, *logizomai*, in Kittel's *TWB*, IV, 287 ff., offer exegetical and historical material that illustrates the possible meanings of both terms. Cf. W. Dantine, *Die Gerechtmachung des Gottlosen* (München, 1959); A. Schlatter, *Der Glaube im Neuen Testament* (Leiden, 1885); R. Bultmann and A. Weiser, "Pisteuo," in Kittel's *TWB*, VI, 174 ff.



and the Protestant Orthodox Fathers derived the formula *justificatio impii*. That statement is daring, surprising, and scandalous because it seems flatly to deny the righteousness of God, or at least to suggest a bizarre view of his justice.

How can Paul maintain that he proclaims the revealed "righteousness of God," when he asserts in the same breath that wicked people are justified by God? How can he say that the righteousness revealed by the sinners' justification is the same righteousness that was "attested by the law and the prophets"? (Rom. 3:21)<sup>2</sup> Does not the whole Old Testament directly contradict and exclude the justification of the wicked?

In the Law it is stated:

I will not (LXX: you shall not) justify (or, acquit) the wicked (Exod. 23:7).

The Lord . . . is forgiving iniquity and transgressions, but he will by no means clear the guilty (Num. 14:18).

(It is the judge's task to) acquit the innocent (or, to justify the righteous) and to condemn the guilty (Deut. 25:1).

You shall do no injustice in judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor (Lev. 19:15).

Therefore, the prophets proclaim:

Woe unto them . . . who acquit the guilty for a bribe and deprive the innocent of his right (Isa. 5:23).

(God will not) acquit the man with wicked scales (Mic. 6:11).

(God in Heaven is asked to act as judge. When he is judge, he will) condemn the guilty by bringing his conduct upon his head, and vindicate the righteous by rewarding him according to his righteousness (I Kings 8:32).

In the Wisdom literature the same judiciary principle is upheld:

He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the Lord (Prov. 17:15).

There is a vanity which takes place on earth, that there are righteous

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 3:22-26; 1:16-17; Gal. 3-4.

men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the wicked, and there are wicked men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the righteous. I said that this also is vanity (Eccles. 8:14; cf. 1:15).

We observe that according to these passages, God's judicial procedure is not derived from standards of legal process among men. But God's righteous judgment appears as norm and standard of all that the earthly judges have to seek and to do. What Psalm 72:1 says of the king, applies to all judges: "Give the king thy justice, O God, and thy righteousness to the royal son." Since God is the righteous judge of all judges (Ps. 82), earthly judges both within and outside Israel are told to heed God's criteria, that is, not to acquit the guilty and not to condemn the innocent. The only person mentioned in the Bible who gives justification and support to any sort of claim raised by plaintiffs or defendants is a wicked "royal son"—the rebellious Absalom, who, by his kind of judgment under the gate, "steals the hearts of the men of Israel" (II Sam. 15:2-6). Those kings of Israel and Judah who bend the law in favor of the rich take after him.

If, according to the witness of the Law, the Prophets, and the Wisdom of the Old Testament, the justification of the wicked is theft, vanity, and abomination by which God is not contaminated, and in which God explicitly forbids terrestrial judges to indulge—how then dare Paul intimate that the righteousness of God is revealed in the justification of the wicked? Is God above his own promise and will? Is he not faithful to himself? When a judge "looks upon the person" of the plaintiff or defendant, when he acquits a man despite obvious guilt, of what value is his judgment? It is a plain fact that in each legal case there are at stake not only the life and fortune of the two parties who stand before the bar, but also the judge's wisdom and justice. So it is in the great Old Testament judgment scenes ("ordeals," *Gottesurteile*) that take place on Carmel and Moriah, and in the trials before King Solomon and the priests.<sup>3</sup>

When God calls Israel, the nation, or any individual, to judgment, he calls to account not only their righteousness, but he vin-

<sup>3</sup> I Kings 18:17 ff.; Gen. 22; I Kings 3; Num. 5.

dicates his own faithfulness to the covenant, that is, his own righteousness. And he succeeds in doing so, for there are voices who gladly make it known that "God is a righteous judge" (Ps. 7:11). "He judges the world with righteousness; he judges the peoples with equity" (Ps. 9:8, cf. 96:13; 98:9). "The Lord is righteous" (Ps. 11:7). "The Lord is just in all his ways" (Ps. 145:17). "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25)

Even when, as in Psalm 73 and in Job, the concealment of God's righteousness created the so-called "problem of theodicy," the righteousness of God, of his judgments, and of his ways is finally asserted.

In view of these unequivocal statements of the Old Testament, the identification of God's righteousness with the justification of the sinner is an amazing feature of Paul's preaching. And as amazing is the fact that in Protestant dogmatic thought, the treatment of theodicy is mostly kept at a safe distance from the doctrine of the justification of the sinner. As if Paul allocated the one to a general doctrine of providence, the other to the doctrine of reconciliation! But what reason has Paul to deny any distance, contradiction, or tension between theodicy and justification, and to affirm that God proves himself righteous by justifying the sinner? God "is *righteous* and he *makes righteous*" (Rom. 3:26). What does this identification mean?

Two ways seem to be preferred by those interpreters who do not simply dodge the issue by taking refuge in the term "paradox."<sup>4</sup>

1. The attempt is made to define righteousness in such a fashion that all connection or resemblance is severed between God's righteousness and due process of law. The procedure dominant in God's court then becomes rather confusing, and certainly not

<sup>4</sup> We quote, as examples, G. Schrenck, Kittel's *TWB*, II, 207 f.; "The *justificatio impii* stands against all orderly human legal process. . . . The message of justification is logically a complete paradox"; C. K. Barrett, *Romans* (London, 1957), p. 89: ". . . a divine act absolutely paradox in its mercy and grace"; N. H. Snaith, *Distinctive Ideas* (London, 1944), p. 77: "His ways are not as our ways. God knows that justice is not enough"; p. 68: "The Bias of Righteousness . . ."; p. 165: "The judicial sense is limited." A careful critical discussion of Snaith's arguments is found in the essay of N. M. Watson, in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXIX (1960), pp. 258, 265.



exemplary for human courts. The heavenly court becomes a tableau in which the royal judge looks gently upon the person of the confessing delinquent, steps down from throne or bar, and embraces him. While such a sequence of events is depicted in the Lucan parables of the prodigal son, of the unrighteous steward, and of the unrighteous judge,<sup>5</sup> it is certainly not what Paul has in mind when he speaks of the righteousness of God! A judge who acted thus might (like Absalom) "steal the hearts of the people." But he could hardly be "justified in his sentences" (cf. Rom. 3:4). His action would be a ruinous example for earthly courts. Such divine justice ought better not to be "given" (Ps. 72:1) to kings and judges on earth. If God's decision were based upon an arbitrary commotion of his heart and a breaking of the order and promises he had given, his decision could by no means be described or defined as "forensic." Neither could any law-abiding citizen be encouraged to have "faith" in it. We consider it impossible that Paul wanted to ascribe to God the will and the decision to call black white, and white black. Or else Paul would not have written that God manifests "his righteousness through the forgiveness of trespasses . . . to manifest in this present time his righteousness (thus to demonstrate) that he is himself righteous and makes righteous . . ." (Rom. 3:25-26). Paul is not an anti-nomian.

2. The attempt is made to repudiate righteousness in favor of love or of something else that supposedly outshines righteousness and gives a better chance to culprits. "Mercy triumphs over judgment" (Jas. 2:13). Righteousness, then, is delegated, if not degraded, to an Old Testament, rabbinical, or Qumranite level of religion or morality that is supposedly left far behind by the higher notion and practice of *agape*. What benefits the sinner, what is good *pro me*, is now considered better than God's own justice.<sup>28</sup> However, if Paul wanted to say that justification happens at the expense of theodicy, he might have said so. Actually, what he said against justification by works, by law, by man himself is not directed against the righteousness of God. For Paul affirms

<sup>5</sup> Luke 15:11-24; 16:1-8; 18:1-8.

with Psalm 51:4 that God "will be praised righteous in his sentences" (Rom. 3:4).<sup>6</sup> "Should God be unrighteous? . . . Far be it!" We observe that according to Paul, God is righteous not only in punishing with wrath those who do not believe, and in "hating Esau," but also in giving for Jesus Christ's sake forgiveness and eternal life, and in "loving Jacob." This judgment to the right and to the left is called "righteous judgment. . . . There is no partiality with God."<sup>7</sup> Even the illustration of God's privilege freely to dispose of his vessels, which is given in Jeremiah's parable of the potter (Jer. 18; Rom. 9:19-23), does not depict God as an arbitrary, unrighteous judge. "The righteousness of God is revealed" in the revelation both of his wrath and of his grace (Rom. 1:16-17, 18 ff.; 3:21 ff.). Paul would not and could not undergird his proclamation of the righteousness by faith, by references to Adam, Abraham, and David<sup>8</sup> if he assumed that in justifying the sinner, God was disavowing all he had before revealed, instituted, promised, and done.

So much in regard to some Protestant attempts to explain the concept, "justification of the wicked."

## II THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD'S JUDGMENT

We sum up the results of our previous considerations of Paul's soteriology by saying that the judgment of God by which the sinner is justified cannot be a paradox or a wanton and arbitrary decision. At least three conditions are to be fulfilled, if that judgment shall speak for, and not against, God's righteousness.

1. God's judgment must be based upon that covenant, law, and promise which he had given Israel long before Jesus was born,

<sup>6</sup> G. v. Rad, *Theologie*, I (München, 1957), 340, 355, 377, speaks of *Gerichtsdoxologien*. Such doxologies are just the opposite of the paradoxography in which the early apologetes were engaged (see R. M. Grant, *Miracle and Natural Law*, pp. 240 ff.). In the New Testament, *Gerichtsdoxologien* are found in Rev. 15:3; 16:5, 7; 19:2. Also in Luke 7:29; John 9:24, reference to them is made. Their refrain is the acclamation given to God, "Thou art righteous, all thy ways are just."

<sup>7</sup> Rom. 2:6-11; 3:4-6, 21-26; 9:13-15.

<sup>8</sup> Rom. 1:4; 3:21; 4:1 ff.; 9-11; Gal. 3-4.

crucified, and raised. Thus his judgment must stand upon a solid legal ground, even the ground prepared by God himself. Were his decision over the sinner simply and strictly opposed to his earlier manifestations and excluded by them, God would be faithful neither to himself nor to Israel. It would not make any sense to identify his righteousness, truth, faithfulness in such fashion as is, for example, done in Romans 3:3-5.<sup>9</sup> In justifying the sinner, God would not be faithful either to his promise or to his command; his "now revealed righteousness" would contradict the Law and the Prophets. But Paul affirms the opposite in Romans 3:21, 31: "Without the law the righteousness of God is revealed—the righteousness that is attested by the law and the prophets. . . . Do we abrogate the law through faith? Far be it! Much more we establish the law."

2. God's judgment must be based upon events—upon the appearance in his court of a witness, or upon the bringing before himself of evidence—that have not occurred in Old Testament times. Since Old Testament or intertestamental persons, events, legal tools (including sacral institutions) did not procure a right and effective way to justify the sinner, something new is required to substantiate the righteousness of the verdict now proclaimed. Paul teaches distinctly that "on the day (when) God judges the hidden things of men according to the Gospel through Jesus Christ," things hidden to former generations are brought to light (Rom. 2:16; cf. Eph. 3:5). In this judgment the "Jew in hiding" receives "praise from God," and Gentiles (like the Ninevites mentioned in Matthew 12:41-42; Luke 11:32) are manifested as having the fulfillment of the law written upon their hearts. Both Jew and Gentile will thus be, without partiality, "justified as doers of the Law" (Rom. 2:10-15, 29). If God's judgment reveals something hidden, then the judgment is not arbitrary. It serves exactly

<sup>9</sup> In these verses, "faithfulness," "truth," and "righteousness" are interchangeable terms and have obviously identical meaning. Similarly in Rev. 19:11, the attributes "faithful," "true," "in righteousness" belong together. In the Old Testament, these terms describe the covenantlike life of both partners to the covenant which God made with man (Hos. 2:19-20; Ps. 89; Exod. 34, etc.).



the purpose of every decent court—to unveil obscured facts and to bring to light, to proclaim, and to enforce what is right.

3. God's judgment must be of such content and character that it inspires not only the litigants but the public at large to acknowledge and praise the equity of the verdict and the righteousness of the judge. If after the proclamation of a verdict, one party only (usually the one favored by the decision) feels satisfied, while the other party and the public shake their heads in astonishment, the verdict's rightness and the judge's justice are rendered suspect. A judgment that is right will find much wider approval than that of its immediate beneficiary. As in the case of Solomon's wise judgment, all Israel and the Queen of Sheba (I Kings 3:28; 10:9) may be moved voluntarily to applaud the judge. And if "here is more than Solomon," then it is only fitting that all powers in heaven, on earth, and under the earth join in the celebration to the honor of God the Father (Phil. 2:10-11). "The mountains and the hills before you shall break forth in singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands" (Isa. 55:12). A judgment's equity is not sufficiently established when it has the appearance of but a literal application of the letter of the law; *summum ius* is often *summa iniuria*. Neither is a judgment's righteousness sufficiently guaranteed by the goodness of the character or intention of the judge. Every honest man may err and has erred, and every tyrant was convinced that he meant well. A right verdict speaks for itself, for the judge, for the common good so eloquently that it evokes voluntary awe and obedience. If this principle may be neglected or forgotten by courts and citizens of today, it is yet given and guaranteed by God himself. According to the whole Bible, God does not wish or plan to rule without inspiring man to respond to him voluntarily and enthusiastically, with praise in the heart and praise in public.<sup>10</sup>

Where then lies the legal ground of the sinner's justification by

<sup>10</sup> If we follow C. Westermann, *Das Loben Gottes in den Psalmen* (Göttingen, 1954), we have to add: God is not satisfied with man's (introvert emotion of) thankfulness. He desires public praise. "In the midst of the congregation I will praise thee" (Ps. 22:22).

God, and of God's "justification" through the acclamation of sinners?

a) It cannot be found in works of the law done by men previously or subsequently to God's verdict. Paul has excluded radically the meritorious value of works and the boasting in them.<sup>11</sup>

b) The legal ground of justification cannot consist of faith if faith be defined as a means of knowledge, as a psychic disposition, or as a social attitude of man. When Paul speaks of justification by faith, he means justification by Jesus Christ's intervention, and not by a subtle feeling or attitude of man that should substitute for the performance of moral or ceremonial good works.<sup>12</sup> In Paul's teaching, the antithesis of faith and works is identified with the antithesis of grace and works;<sup>13</sup> faith is for this reason not to be counted as a work.

c) The legal ground of justification cannot be placed in a sudden impulse or inclination of God's heart toward the sinner. For the righteous judge is not partial.<sup>14</sup> He might be praised as lenient, condoning, astonishing, paradoxical, but never as just, if he simply overlooked the sin of the sinner. His grace might be called by any other name except justification, if he stopped being a judge and

<sup>11</sup> Rom. 3:23, 28; 4:5; 10:3 ff.; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9; Eph. 2:6-8; Titus 3:5. We observe that in Paul's theology the exclusion of the meritorious or legal effect of good works done, e.g., by the Patriarchs, the Maccabees, or contemporary individuals, does not diminish or throw out the necessity of being a "doer of the law" and of "good works." According to Rom. 2:7, 10, 13-15; II Cor. 5:10; Eph. 6:8, not to mention Jas. 2:14-26; Rev. 2:23; 14:13; 20:12-13; Matt. 5:12, etc., the heavenly judge is taking account of the works done in man's lifetime; the Synoptic Gospels speak frankly of reward. In John 6:28-29, faith in Jesus Christ is identified with "the work of God" that man has to do. A new approach to understanding the place of works pleasing to God, in Paul's theology, is opened by K. Stalder, *Das Werk des Geistes in der Heiligung bei Paulus* (Zürich, 1962).

<sup>12</sup> Those rabbinical protests against Paul, and the equivalent Roman Catholic polemics against the Reformer's interpretation of the apostle, that treat and condemn the *sola fide* on the ground that faith be not the only work required by God, misunderstood Paul. In Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament* (München, 1926), III, 542 ff.; and G. F. Moore, *Judaism* (Cambridge, 1954), II, 83 f., samples of Jewish polemics, in H. Küng, *Rechtfertigung*, pp. 243 ff., specimens of Roman Catholic polemics, are collected and discussed.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Rom. 4:16; 6:14; Gal. 2:21.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:8; Col. 3:25; Jas. 2:1.



became a lenient, blind, yielding old man. Paul, however, does not retire the righteous judge in favor of the loving father.<sup>15</sup> In Romans, for example, both the righteousness of God the judge (chs. 1-3), and the love of God the Father (ch. 8) are described in equally positive terms. The judge is Father; the Father is our only Judge.

d) The legal ground of justification—and the reason to praise God as the justifier of the wicked—lies in Jesus Christ exclusively.<sup>16</sup> It lies in his person, not in a thing. It lies in his history, not in an immovable status. It lies in his death and resurrection, not in his teaching, or in our obedience to it. Man's faith has a part in that legal ground only inasmuch as it is faith in *Jesus Christ*. This faith says, "Not I, but Jesus Christ in me" (Gal. 2:20).

While the majority of Pauline utterances about justification, redemption, and reconciliation of the sinner refer specifically to the cross, death, or blood of Christ, the statements "He was raised for our justification" and "If Christ has not been raised . . . you are still in your sins" mention the resurrection. We hold that these brief references to the resurrection presuppose and proclaim the same understanding of the resurrection which we found in the sermons in Acts, and which we illustrated by referring to the factual and to a hypothetical development of an earthly trial in court. When by the resurrection, the function of the *corpus delicti* has been reversed, because the victim's blood stops crying for revenge and calls for mercy by pleading in favor of the trespassers, then the judge does the right thing, reveals his righteousness, and deserves acclamation in acquitting and releasing the culprits. Now, according to Paul, Jesus Christ has been raised and is pleading as an advocate for sinners. God himself made Jesus the expiator (or "expiation," Rom. 3:25; 8:34). The author of Hebrews puts much emphasis upon the same action. Jesus Christ's blood speaks

<sup>15</sup> We repeat: By telling the stories of the forgiving father, the unrighteous judge and steward, and by recording a saying that treats of the taking of the kingdom by storm, at the expense of the Law and the Prophets (Luke 16:16), Luke rather than Paul appears prone to the charge of antinomianism. In Chapter 3 we have attempted to show that this charge does not take account of the full work and thought of Luke.

<sup>16</sup> Rom. 2:16; 3:24; 5:1; 8:29-34, etc.



"better" than Abel's, not for revenge and remembrance of sin, but for mercy and grace and "remembering the sins no more." It is God's privilege to select and install for the affairs of men such a high priest and mediator, who is merciful to man and faithful to God at the same time.<sup>17</sup>

The gift of such an advocate, the making of such a plea, and the acceptance of such arguing for man is more than the presence of an attorney appointed by men might effect. In the trial before God's court, the murdered and raised child is also the attorney for the defense. So he is not only a *corpus*, or evidence before the law. But he is even more than attorney at the bar; he is at the same time the legal ground, the advocate, and the proclaimer of the sinners' justification. For this reason, Jesus Christ himself is sometimes denoted as the judge of the living and the dead, without any infringement upon God's privilege.<sup>18</sup> Because God handles the judgment over man in a way which is not open to man's imitation, or to substitution by other courts and sorts of judgment, Paul—as well as Jesus Christ, and James, and the Revelation of John—insists upon the prerogative of God to pronounce judgment.<sup>19</sup> When men judge one another they necessarily have to condemn the evil they perceive; if they do not, they themselves are condemned because of their partiality. It is God's privilege to give and to use ways and means; that is, to set forth a person and occasion to save in the face of well-deserved condemnation, and to be righteous even when he is gracious. That God so judges—this is the mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ which had been hidden in former times.

"He was raised for our justification. . . . If Christ is not raised . . . you are still in your sins." Paul connects the justification most intimately with Christ's resurrection. We can now sum up reasons why he does so. The resurrection is the enthronement of the divinely appointed intercessor for the sinners; it is the validation of his ministry; it is the proclamation of his work's accomplish-

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Heb. 2:17; 4:15 f.; 5:1-10; 7:25; 10:3, 17; 12:24; 13:20.

<sup>18</sup> II Thess. 1:6 ff.; II Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10, variant readings; Eph. 6:8-9; cf. Acts 10:42; 17:31, and the Son of man sayings in the Synoptic Gospels.

<sup>19</sup> Rom. 2:1 ff.; Matt. 7:1 ff.; Jas. 4:11-12; Rev. 5:2-5.

ment; it is the ground of all certainty and trust in the victory and regal rule of grace over sin. Thus it is the defeat of all misdeeds of man, and the ground of new life.

These statements can by no means exhaust the meaning of Christ's resurrection in Paul's preaching. We have shown in Chapter 1 that the same resurrection has also an inner-trinitarian and a cosmic report; it is the revelation of God's faithfulness to his Son, and the subjugation of all good and evil powers and structures of the world. But it was necessary specifically to elaborate how, out of the intimate relationship between Father and Son, shines the mystery of the sinner's legitimate and valid justification. The resurrection does not mythify or destroy this mystery. But it reveals and proclaims it in such a fashion that all knees shall bow. It was Luke's special intention to show the resurrection's relevance in market places and earthly courts; it is Paul's particular emphasis to mention and to treat it as the mystery of God's own court that reaches from heaven to earth. Paul does not relegate it to an unfathomable realm of religious heights or psychic depths; he does not spiritualize the resurrection. But he shows that the resurrection is the end of our unrighteousness and the triumph of God's righteousness—even here on earth where we live and struggle and hope.

Why just the resurrection? Since God had sent his Son to die for sinners, since his Son obediently accepted the humiliating death, and since men become guilty of death by murder—therefore, nothing less and nothing other than resurrection could be the means to “justify” the faithful God, the obedient Christ, and sinful man. The justification by the resurrection is not a paradox—it is much more a beautiful and great deed of God, worthy to be praised. Even a theological treatise, such as this, can have no other purpose than “to praise God as just in his sentences.”

VERNE H. FLETCHER

**Part Two**

APPLICATION



# Resurrection and Politics

## I THE CONSTITUTIVE EVENT

The statements made in Paul's sermons and letters in regard to the juridical and legal effects of the resurrection are matched by declarations in respect to its political relevance. By raising Christ from the dead, God "made him sit at his right hand . . . above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and . . . put all things under his feet . . . that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and every tongue confess . . . Jesus Christ is Lord" (Eph. 1:20-22; Phil. 2:10, 11). The resurrection is thus proclaimed as a political event of universal import.

Are we really to understand this political terminology as claiming that the resurrection is related empirically to the structures of power and authority in the political life of societies? Is it not, rather, to be taken metaphorically? There are those who would contend that what little the New Testament has to say specifically about politics is to be found in exhortations such as that of Romans 13: Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. Some of those who so read the New Testament, disturbed by what they suppose to be an indiscriminate sanction of the status quo, feel obliged, whether in anger or in sorrow, to seek elsewhere the bases of political ethics. Others, on the contrary, rejoice that the New Testament is on the side of order and authority. Implicit in

this latter view is the relegation of the authority of Jesus Christ to another sphere of reality—"far above," beyond, and finally, out of contact with the dubious realm of the political life of man which God has entrusted to the natural or created order of the state. Since the authority of Christ is "ultimate authority," there is no question that the bowing of the knee to him is the rule observed in "heavenly places"; on earth, however, its strict observance is necessarily limited to "the religious sphere." Nevertheless, it is recommended that the politician attend church somewhere—the church of his choice, of course.

It is our contention that the scriptural witness is misrepresented by both of these views—the view that the New Testament has little to say to us today in respect to political life, and the view that the New Testament categorically sanctions a conservative political order. Is the New Testament not saying, on the contrary, that God's righteousness, vindicated by the resurrection, lays immediate claim to the totality of man's existence in time, in nature, and in society? While it cannot be denied that the early Christians were willing to leave the political status quo alone, was this attitude not secondary to their primary and revolutionary conviction that one righteous God ruled over all men through his risen Son? Indeed, in their confessions of faith, the meaning of the resurrection was frequently elucidated, as has been earlier noted. Moreover, it was held that behind all empirical rule and authority stand the ambiguous "principalities and powers" which the risen Christ both conquers and reconciles; his dominion extends over the whole structure, visible and invisible. They took at face value the risen Christ's announcement: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given unto me" (Matt. 28:18). In this conviction we are at one with the early Christians. We shall take the New Testament witness to the resurrection as seriously in respect to political questions as has been done in previous chapters in respect to forgiveness and justification.

We may say a word at this point as to our understanding of the relation of the kerygma to the Christian's judgments on the historical situation and his evaluation of public policies, to his concrete decisions and activities in the political sphere, and, indeed,

to the whole broad field of Christian ethics. In our view, Christian ethics is the attempt to respond out of the concrete historical and cultural situation to the great acts of God on man's behalf, culminating in, and spreading out from, the event of Jesus Christ. This does not mean, certainly, that Christians have at their disposal in the biblical witness to the divine, a calendar of events or a set of rules and precepts by which to avoid the difficult and painful task of striving to comprehend the complex, ambiguous situations in which they live and act. Nor, on the other hand, is the kerygma a matter of ultimate norms or ideals, or of general truths which must be liberated from a time-bound, archaic world view in order to be rendered serviceable to the contemporary world. It is, rather, in the pattern and shape of the actualization of the divine purpose in history that we are to seek, in pragmatic dialogue with the concrete and the contemporary, to understand the movement of history, as well as to elaborate the direction and content of man's response.

Christian ethics regards the whole sweep of God's activity for mankind from the vantage point of the one decisive moment which is the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He is the key to God's continuing activity in human history, as well as to the divine intention in creation. In other words, we deny any discontinuity between the creative act of God and his redemptive act, any dichotomy between the individual under grace, and society under an antecedent law. The new reality brought into being by Jesus Christ is the decisive event in history, and as such, the formative element in the pattern of Christian ethical judgment and action. However, the political stance of Christians does not isolate them from their fellows, since they are simply acting and witnessing, on behalf of all men, to the firm righteousness and the inexhaustible mercy of God—the same righteousness and mercy which sustains the life of all men in society.

In one further preliminary remark we would suggest a definition of the realm of politics in general terms: The political order is that structure of power and authority within a given collectivity whereby policies are determined and resources are ordered toward their realization. We may relate this definition to the great tra-



dition in political thought if we express it in these more specific terms: Politics is concerned with that rational ordering of the available means toward their common good. The general definition may be applied to collectivities of varying dimensions, both smaller and greater than the single sovereign nation, including, for example, such collectivities as "the Atlantic Community." It may even be extended, with some modifications, to include questions of politics on a global scale, where several power structures and diverse views as to the utilization of world resources are in conflict.

However, in this chapter we will make no attempt to survey the whole area of the political order. As a matter of fact, the implications of the resurrection for politics will be considered only in relation to the sphere of global politics. Even here, we do not propose to enter into explicit conversation with the recent literature on Christian ethics in relation to international politics. On the contrary, our intentions are quite modest. We will first discuss certain Pauline passages which point to the political significance of the resurrection—passages which unfold before us a vision of history in universal dimensions—and, having sought to determine the main features of the pattern suggested by this material, we will briefly draw these guidelines further in the direction of what may be conceded to be the two crucial problems of international politics today.

No passage in Pauline literature is more "political" than one to be found in the middle of the so-called "resurrection chapter" (I Cor. 15:20-28). Not only are sin and death subject to the power of the risen Christ, according to this chapter, but equally "every rule and authority and power . . . for God has put all things in subjection under his feet." This image is an allusion to Psalm 110, in which all enemies have become as the king's footstool. This present age, in which the risen Christ wages warfare, is envisioned as coming to its end with the presentation to God the Father of a kingdom in which all opponents have been conquered. The drama of this age is balanced between the two terms, "all things *are* put in subjection under him," and "*when* all things are subjected to him." The decisive victory has already been won; its total impact

has yet to take full effect. This passage raises in our minds a question which is not clearly answered: What is the relation between the statement that all power and authority shall be made of no effect, and the promise that in Christ *all* shall be made alive? Does the former point to demonic forces which enthrall mankind and which must be totally eliminated without equivocation? We turn to other passages for the elucidation of this question.

In the Colossian letter, the principalities and powers appear in a different light (1:15-20). We observe at once that "the first-born from the dead" is likewise "the first-born of all creation." The meaning of the latter designation is clarified by the claim that in him, through him, and for him, all things were created and are sustained, including thrones, dominions, principalities, and authorities. Now, by the event of the resurrection, he who is pre-eminent in creation is given a new pre-eminence, to the end that through him all things may be reconciled. As there is correspondence between "the first-born from all creation" and "the first-born from the dead," so there is correspondence between all things created and all things reconciled. Is this a different version of the destiny of "all things" than that which we discovered in I Corinthians 15? It would be premature so to conclude, as will be seen from a further development in the Colossian letter (2:9-15). Here, as in the Corinthian passage, the raising of Christ is related not only to the forgiveness of sins, but also to the "disarming of principalities and powers" and the triumphing over them. Considering these passages together, we would conclude that the pre-eminence of Christ in respect to the powers and authorities involves not only their subjection, but also their reconciliation. Divine conquest implies domination *and* liberation, restoration. There is continuity in the relationship of Christ to "all things," from creation, through rebellion, to reconciliation—a continuity assured by the unfaltering purpose of God.

It is important at this point that we remember the *manner* in which this continuity and purpose are pursued. The pre-eminence of Christ has a dynamic and, from a human point of view, most surprising history, in the course of which the "first-born of all creation" took the form of a servant, and *as such* was raised up



and exalted to the right hand of God in the majesty and strength of the pre-eminent servant. The classical description of this divine gesture-in-history is to be found in the liturgy of Philippians 2:6-11. The six stanzas of this hymn, symmetrically divided into two main sections, are not to be understood as indicating a succession of discontinuous states but, if we may so express it, a cumulative becoming. This is to say that however much the quality of the sovereign was hidden during the time of Christ's humiliation, the quality of the servant was manifest in his exaltation. The resurrection did not bring his ministry of service to an end; rather, it consecrated it as universal. Jesus Christ unites in his person the dignity of supreme sovereign and the humility of supreme servant. He reigns as servant; he serves with power and authority. He is the sovereign-servant. Moreover, the form of God's action in Christ is definitive for the attitudes and behavior of Christians. This is clear from the position of this passage as a sort of parenthesis in a very practical letter, primarily devoted to exhorting the Philippians to conduct themselves in a worthy manner, marked by joyous affirmation in the midst of affliction and suffering for Christ's sake.

Returning briefly to the Colossian letter, a further observation is to be made. The risen Christ has been designated by the apostle as "head of all rule and authority" and "head of the church." However, if Christ is engaged in reconciling *all things*, as contended, what remains to distinguish church from world and, indeed, what function remains to the church? Does not the church become superfluous? In Colossians 1:24-28, the essential vocation of the church becomes clear from the fact that God has chosen to make manifest to the church the heretofore hidden "mystery" of "how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery which is Christ"—that is, all which Christ is and does. To the church is made known the presence of Christ incognito in the world. The function of the church is indicated in the affirmation: "Him we proclaim . . . that we may present every man mature in Christ." Integral to this vocation, so the apostle seems to suggest, is a participation in the struggle and afflictions of Christ for his completion and fulfillment.



Further light is thrown on the Pauline understanding of this "mystery of Christ" in the Ephesian letter (3:4-11). The language of Ephesians does not allow the conception of an esoteric body of knowledge into which certain Gentiles may be initiated. Quite to the contrary, the goal of the mission to the Gentiles is "to make *all men* see. . . ." The mystery of Christ is the good news that the Gentiles also are *already* co-inheritors, *equally* members of a common body, *already* partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus. Unknown to them, this mystery is revealed to the church. The church is made to know, "already before all others" (to use Karl Barth's unforgettable phrase), the full scope of the purpose of God, in which all men are included. The time has arrived for this divine plan to be announced in public; the effect of the resurrection is that "the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the principalities and powers," in the midst of which the risen Christ is already at work, although unrecognized. The church exists as a public sign, as a "demonstration project," pointing to the fact that the dividing walls of hostility *have* been broken down, and that one new man *has* been created in place of the division of mankind into those who were far off and those who were near (2:11-18). This work of reconciling and of reuniting, God has "accomplished in Christ when he raised him from the dead and made him sit at his right hand" in order "to bring all things under one head," according to "the mystery of his will" and purpose (1:19-23, 9, 10).

The Pauline conception of universal sovereignty as reconciling sovereignty is further emphasized in II Corinthians 5:14-21. Corresponding to the explicit statement that he "died for all; therefore all have died," is the implication, sufficiently clear when the whole passage is taken into account, that similarly he was raised for all, therefore all are raised. "From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view," that is, simply as a man inescapably charged with his trespasses and given up to an irreversible hostility against God. For, in fact, this old order, in which the world is imprisoned by its own rebellion, has been overthrown; "the new has come," the new order whose distinctive aspect is that God is reconciling the world in Christ. The new

life-condition, in which man finds himself by virtue of his recreation with the risen Christ, was made possible only through the supreme act of identification with man on the part of the dying Christ, the servant and the minister of reconciliation, whom God "made to be sin" for man's sake. However, since the world has not as yet recognized the existence of this new reality, those who have been awakened to it are appointed as ambassadors, that is, ministers or servants of *the* servant, through whom God intends to arouse mankind to the new determination of human existence. As a consequence of Christ's total identification with the sin of man, God replies, so the passage concludes, with a total determination of man for life in his righteousness.

Universal determination for righteousness, the theme of Paul's proclamation on the Areopagus (Acts 17:22-31), may be summarized as follows: The unity of all the peoples of mankind is perceived, not only from the universal divine gift of life and the means of sustaining it, but also from the universal command to man that he awaken from ignorance of the nature and purpose of God, now that one man has been appointed who will imminently judge the world in righteousness—a fact of which God has given proof by the raising of this man from the dead.

And finally, our theme of the political relevance of the resurrection is placed in broadest possible context by Romans 8:18-25, 34-39. Nothing in all creation can separate us from the risen Christ at the right hand of God. Indeed, creation itself—humanity, its history, and its material environment—is turned in hope and travail toward "the glory that is to be revealed." And we ourselves are simply part of this total creation, moving toward ultimate liberation from bondage to futility and decay. While it is true that we experience "the first fruits of the Spirit" ("The Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you," 8:11), and thus know a certain triumph "through him who loved us," nevertheless, we "groan inwardly" as we undergo toil and tribulation. And it is in "hope for what we do not see" that we wait for him for whom the whole creation waits and who already is present as the risen Christ.

From these few passages there begins to emerge a politically



relevant pattern of which we wish to underscore four dimensions. As the word "dimensions" implies, the four are linked together and all are implied in each.

### The Risen Christ as Universal Sovereign

The political is the realm of power and authority. Since power is integral to the political structure of human society, it is subject to distortion and, in biblical language, is claimed by the dominion of darkness. Indeed, a profound, cosmic disorder permeates the whole of creation; the principalities and powers have risen in rebellion against their Creator, dislocating man's social existence, bringing under bondage the striving of his reason and creativity, and aiding his revolt against the divine will. "God and the devil are fighting there, and the battlefield is the heart of man." At stake is the destiny of mankind; history itself is the scene of conflict; and war is made against perverted ideologies (to use contemporary language), against unjust structures of authority, tyrannical patterns of mass culture, and idolatrous ethnic and national loyalties. But the crucial hour has arrived. Rising from mortal struggle with the forces of darkness, Christ is established as universal, righteous sovereign.

The New Testament maintains an ambivalent attitude toward the power and authority, and, consequently, toward those who hold and wield power and authority. As puppets of the Evil One, under the dominion of darkness, the principalities and powers are conceived of as disarmed and neutralized by Christ. However, as creatures of God, they are being set free, that is, redirected toward their proper roles to the end that righteousness may prevail. This definitely counteracts any view of the political order as exclusively the realm of the Devil; Christ is sovereignly at work in the ambiguous structures of human society. At the same time, this makes impossible any view that the political order belongs to a second kingdom under a natural or created law where the risen Christ cannot touch it, or, at any rate, chooses to leave it to fend for itself. It is inadmissible, for example, that Romans 13 be abstracted from the total context of Pauline thought and be interpreted as teaching unquestioning, passive submission to governing



authorities everywhere and at all times (except perhaps when "religious liberty"—a dubious concept when taken in its minimal sense—is at stake). If we admit that for the New Testament invisible authorities stand behind actual authorities, Paul could scarcely be advocating a political quietism, while at the same time admonishing us to contend against the principalities and powers, and making known to them the divine plan (Eph. 6:12; 3:10).

We do not mean to suggest that the Christian is somehow exempt from obedience to the laws and the government of the nation of which he is a part. He is not called to be an anarchist; he must likewise refuse any kind of sentimental internationalism. He is most definitely commanded to act as a responsible subject of his own nation. But what we do mean to suggest is that submission to political authorities is qualified by the fact that these same authorities are themselves in submission to the authority of the risen Christ, and that the Christian's obedience as a citizen is finally controlled by *this* fact which may sometimes compel him to take a stand in opposition to the command of the state. A political order may rightly demand of us responsible participation, but no political order may require ultimate loyalty.

Political powers and authorities are ambiguous. The only unambiguous fact about them is that Christ is their creator, and Christ is their sovereign. All else must be weighed and analyzed. The fight against unjust institutions is to be carried on as an active struggle to create just institutions; perverted ideologies are to be countered and surpassed by the creation of new symbols and ideas, by means of which nations and peoples may redefine their vocations and develop a new consensus. What is needed in the political order is power in league with righteousness. The risen Christ wages warfare for the restoration of rebellious structures and distorted values to the purposes for which they were created and are sustained—in him, through him, and for him—and in view of their renewal for righteousness.

Moreover, not only is Christ's power in league with righteousness, but his righteous power rules through service. He, through whom all things received their form and their purpose, becomes himself their servant, offers himself to them. The conquering lion

is identical with the suffering lamb, to whom is given all power and all wisdom to reign over all the earth (Rev. 5:5-6). The greatest of all is He who serves (Luke 22:24-27), announcing good news to the dispossessed, and liberation to the exploited. Peter rejected (as we, too, would have done in his place) the idea of a Christ-servant (Matt. 16:22; John 13:6-8), but by the resurrection he was made to comprehend this paradox when "God raised his servant" (Acts 3:13, 26). As a man, Jesus Christ took the form of a servant; as the servant of servants he died the death of a criminal. "Therefore," for this reason—not as a reward for humility, not as a release from struggle or a rest from trial and, above all, not as the setting aside of a burdensome ministry of service—but in his vocation as servant, and *as such*, he is raised to the right hand of the Father. Since it is the Christ-servant who is now sovereign, the ordinary scale of values is radically reversed. The Lord of all is the servant of all. Strength is no longer manifested by the power to dominate, but by the power to serve. The elite are those who surpass in service. The greatness of a people or a nation is to be measured not by its pretension to cultural or racial superiority, by which it justifies the subordination of the weak to its own ends, not by its proclamation of noble principles which are but the mask of collective egoism and the screen for economic privileges, but by its will to be placed in the service of the poorer and the weaker. The authority of the Universal Sovereign is exercised through his power to serve mankind in view of man's determination for life in righteousness.

### The World as the Sphere of Renewal

The resurrection of Christ is God's reply to the evil that men do. God sits in his heaven and laughs. By a careful reading of the Scriptures, however, we are permitted to assert that this laughter does not have overtones of derision, nor does it turn into a yawn. Joy in heaven is at God's own expense. His reply to the evil that men do is not the vengeance of abandonment, to which man might reply in Promethean defiance, but the unanswerable judgment of forgiveness and the offer of a new departure for man. Therefore, every knee shall bow, not in cringing fear but in adoration of



the name. God in Christ confounds the evil that men do, *and* offers forgiveness to these same evildoers—that is, to us all. Moreover, it is precisely for this offer of forgiveness that man has been sustained in life despite his sinful rejection of the Giver of life. Who is to know, apart from Christ's resurrection, that the Creator is in fact not vengeful in the face of the creature's rebellion, that he has in fact guided the course of human history against all appearances that it is only a mockery? On the basis of the biblical witness we may not separate a realm of providence from a realm of reconciliation, for the former is the stage set for the enactment of the latter; indeed, is itself involved in the drama. For this reason also, we may not place Christ and the church over against the world and the Devil, as though Christ reigned in mercy over the chosen few, but in judgment over the rebellious many. The schema is not the few and the many. It is One for all. All are subject to the righteous forgiveness of the One. The world—the whole world, the real world—is not only the sphere of providential rule, but also the sphere of renewal.

Humanity is the object of Christ's work of reconciliation. This statement does not refer to some humanity-in-the-abstract. God was incarnate in Christ as *a* man—not the "ideal man," but man as a finite creature, not the more-or-less successful, well-adjusted "average man," but man in poverty, in weakness, man forsaken, abandoned, himself made sin and a curse in the place of accursed sinners. We may not bypass the strange way in which the incarnate Christ identified himself with the deprived and the dispossessed, with the unwashed and the unsterilized, with the disreputable, the undeserving, and the least worthy. But, it may be insisted, was he not also concerned with the educated, the well-to-do, the power elite? Yes, most definitely! To the wise he said, "You must be born anew." To the rich he said, "You lack one thing: give all you have to the poor." And to the powerful he said, "You have no power except that given you from above." Whatever we may wish to do with it (and while affirming at the same time the universalism of Christ), the fact is undeniable that the reconciler of all men showed an intense and special concern for the lowliest, to the extent of initiating a total reversal of the



status pyramid (Luke 1:52, 53). To the disinherited of the earth he is not only brother, but servant. ("Others he saved, himself he cannot save.") Who could be lowlier than the slave of an outcast? And those who, in his name, would place themselves in the service of the lowliest will experience there the unexpected joy of discovering Christ, the servant of all. "I was hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sick, imprisoned." In serving the lowliest, it is Christ whom one serves. This is literal, not poetic. He is one of "them": pariahs, untouchables, despised, damned. Nevertheless, we must keep clearly in view the manner in which he is the servant of the lowly, for it is not in order to commiserate with their misery, but in order to raise them up to the dignity of their humanity. It is a matter of *raising* the fallen, of *liberating* the captives, of *filling* the hungry, of proclaiming, "Blessed are the poor for the King is on their side."

In view of these things, it can scarcely be a matter of indifference that in our day those peoples of the world whom recent history had excluded from the banquet table have "come of age." This, of course, is by no means entirely of their own doing. The fact that former colonial peoples are presently entering a new epoch of their histories, open to economic development and to political self-determination, is in part a direct, if often unintended, contribution of occidental domination which jolted stagnant economies, aroused subjugated peoples from ancient lethargy, and encouraged their present impatience. The greatest gift from the West has undoubtedly been the idea of human dignity and self-respect, in the name of which the world's peoples are now rebelling against the very powers whose professions of faith in man were the source of their rebellion. It must be admitted that the white man in economically advanced societies has been, at his best, paternalistic toward his brother in nonindustrialized areas, and that he has carried his "burden" with little grace, but with no little profit to himself.

The universal determination of the underdeveloped laboring peoples of the world to claim their dignity as men is the great new fact of our day. Obviously, something is taking place which will have far-reaching consequences, and we may be certain that

Christ is at work there, though in ways that are not altogether clear to us. However, there is a darker side to the picture, for if the truth be told, the economically privileged nations are in no hurry to make room for the newcomers. The advancement of underprivileged peoples to a decent standard of living is now within the range of possibilities, but scientific technology, far from being an instrument at the service of all mankind, is still the monopoly of the few. For example, agronomists claim that it is technically possible to nourish many more than the present world population; however, the majority of this population remains chronically undernourished. Technical capability is impotent without enabling political decision.

The bourgeois church, meanwhile, at ease within its own precincts, has scarcely taken seriously the universality of Christ's work of reconciliation. The church needs, as H. R. Weber has expressed it, "a second conversion with Christ to the world." For the risen Christ lays claim to the world as the sphere of his activity. The whole of man's world—religions, cultures, philosophies, art, law, politics, economic and social systems, science and technology—is within his purview and concern. All efforts to understand and to change, to affirm and to question, to produce and to enjoy, to order and to create, to achieve and to experience, to pray and to celebrate—all of these are under his claim. They are not self-ordering; they are not ends in themselves. The peoples of the world are called into responsible participation in the contemporary historical task. It is true that all of man's positive activities are in danger of monstrous distortion, of inhuman perversion, of idolatrous disfigurement, but no one of them is extraneous to the sphere of renewal.

### **Man's History as Travail Toward the New Age**

The total involvement of Christ in the affairs of this world is the hidden dynamic of man's history, driving it toward an end which is a new beginning. Man, in his concrete historical enterprise, is the subject of the reign of Christ and is oriented toward the New Age. He who was at the beginning of all things is the common destiny toward which all things move. It would not be

difficult to produce evidence which would apparently contradict this affirmation. For it is certainly premature to speak of the imminence of one world community or of a common world civilization, nor is it certain that such lies on the immediate horizon. The most we can say is that as a result of the spread of modern scientific knowledge and techniques, all peoples of the world are being drawn toward an irreversible interdependence, and any return to their former insular existences is—barring nuclear catastrophe—out of the question. Yet the task of world economic and cultural development—a task which can be pursued successfully only as a common task—is presently thwarted by the antagonism of two giant *frères-ennemis*; and the so-called “partnership” of peoples, so far as it is a reality today, would be more accurately defined as an interdependence in inequality and in inequity. The “end of colonialism” has not meant to any appreciable degree the beginning of economic self-determination. The relationship of domination-subordination remains everywhere the rule among nations. It is still the rich who are sated, while the hungry are sent away empty. The mighty are exalted, and the proud imagine a fearful thing. Indeed, the affirmation of the presence of the New Age is controverted on every hand. Man’s hope appears to be trapped between two hostile “organized systems of self-righteousness.” Diplomatic conversations between the power blocs seem to be but a series of inevitable steps in an all-but-certainly futile endeavor. Constructive alternatives are notoriously scarce, and those who propose them seldom have the attention of persons in a position to put them into effect. The old order is everywhere in evidence.

Nevertheless, the ubiquity of the old does not preclude the possibility of the new, nor indeed the very presence of the new.

It is in the midst of the worn-out, the obstinate, the indurate situation, that newness will break out. God may choose “things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are” (I Cor. 1:28); he may choose times that are unpropitious, to decide that the time is ripe. And then, quite suddenly and without announcement, the new is disclosed—for example, the morning they began to walk to work in Montgomery, Alabama. Not every surprise, of course, not



every reversal or *coup d'état*, could be said to be a bearer of the New Age.

What is the criterion of "newness"? Newness is manifested in the power to prevail (though often in spite of dubious prognosis), *and* insofar as there is embodied a constructive alternative in the face of an apparent impasse or of a destructive and unjust pattern of social or international relationships. Given the obduracy of the old order, it will not be supposed that all this will take place politely and without conflict. It is hypocrisy to be shocked by the desperate revolt of the exasperated underdog, which may be marked by violence if we have previously been complacent in the face of the exploiters' long-standing monopoly of power that veiled the threat of violence in the glove of external order. But, whether inaugurated by revolution, by nonviolent resistance, by negotiated transfer of power, by gradual transformation, or by whatever other means, the pertinent question to ask is whether the new order of things is in truth a bearer of newness, bringing a new quality of justice; or, on the contrary, does it merely replace foreign with indigenous masters, bourgeois with proletarian exploiters, substituting slogans for deeds and camouflaging self-seeking designs in glowing promises?

Man's history then is ambiguous. There is no clear line of "progress," but neither has the human enterprise been abandoned to futility. The old order still persists, during which humanity is permanently exposed to the threat of nothingness; but in Christ the New Age is already mysteriously present. This, to be sure, is no static tension, no Manichaeian balance, but a pressing forward between competing alternatives and rival forces. Therefore, all creation is in travail, and the risen Christ wages warfare. Man's history labors toward that which shall be, toward the full measure of the stature of Christ within which will be found humanity full-grown (Eph. 4:13). Consequently, all social arrangements are provisional in view of the New Age. We may not absolutize either the established order, on the one hand, nor its total overthrow, on the other. Any established order is by definition open to criticism, and requires continual transformation. But no transformed order can itself be any more than travail toward the New Age; its

most positive creative elements are deformed in the pretension to be itself the embodiment of utopia. Man must travail to the end of his history, but this end, this frontier—or, rather, He who stands at this frontier—gives meaning to this history.

### The Church as Witness and Sign

The powerful bias of the gospel toward universality is a source of apprehension for Christians. For them also, we ask. Yes! replies the gospel. Then why us? For their sake! It is true, of course, that the church is the object of Christ's special concern, but this special concern is to be understood as a function of his concern for all. The calling of a particular people, the church no less than Israel, gives it no claim to exclusive favors, but, rather, places upon it the burden of inclusive responsibilities. The fact and meaning of the resurrection are made manifest to the church in advance of all others—but on behalf of all others, with the mission to make all men see. The church exists for the sake of the world. The church lives representatively for all humanity, aware of that renewal which other men ignore, but in which they are actually involved, empowered by that victory which other men do not as yet recognize, but which is nonetheless taking effect everywhere, and hastening toward that goal which the church shares with all humanity. Not only does the church acknowledge, on behalf of all, the dominion of Christ over both church and world; the church is also commissioned to arouse the world to the allegiance due the risen Christ, is also called to discern and to indicate the direction of his creative activity in the world, is also empowered to give witness, especially before men of power and authority.

Furthermore, the church is not only summoned before all others to receive the news, and sent forth as a messenger to give witness to it; the church is also appointed to be a sign of that same reality, a demonstration of Christ's reconciling rulership, a foretaste of the age to come, a people through whom all peoples of the world are blessed. The church is called to be a new nation among nations, governed by the authority which is above all authorities, claiming an unlimited allegiance. This does not contradict the obligation of giving to Caesar that which is Caesar's,



that is, the limited loyalty due the nation of which one is a member. Did not Paul tell the Athenians that the existence of distinct nations and peoples falls within the providence of God? But he placed this particularism within the larger context of the unity of mankind in origin and in destiny. The new nation, then, is not the sign of the abandonment of all other nations—quite the contrary. But it is subversive of all narrow exclusivism, of all provincial boundaries, of all nationalistic idols. This new nation among nations is distinguished from all others in that its vocation is not that of one additional particularism, but that of an anticipated universalism. It is a kingdom of priests gathered from all nations (Rev. 5:9, 10). As the priest represents the whole people before God, so the kingdom of priests represents (bears the burden of, prays for, suffers on behalf of, is a sign to, lives in the service of) humanity as a whole. This is the kingdom which Jesus promised to his disciples (Luke 22:28–30), though how little they understood it. It is a kingdom whose power is expressed in concrete service, a nation which does not exclude, but, rather, represents the whole, which exists not in separation from other nations, but rather in their midst. The new nation is a sign of God's universalism, the *avant-garde* of the new humanity in Christ.

It takes no considerable humility to admit that this is insufficient demonstration. The ambiguity of the time between the resurrection and the parousia is present also within the church. The church can scarcely point to itself as that locus of Christ's fulfilled authority. It cannot, therefore, claim to be the mother and teacher of mankind. Its witness and demonstration is imperfect, hesitant, and fumbling. Ultimately, Christ is his own witness. *His* deeds are the signs. And these deeds he performs through the divine Spirit in the midst of the common life of the word. Everywhere and already, Christ is at work. He does not wait for the church to develop its global strategy—he executes his own. As the church is not the exclusive beneficiary of Christ's action, neither is it his sole instrument. His mighty works are now done in Tyre and Sidon, or even in Sodom (cf. Matt. 11:20–24). If the church is called to minister to the world, there is a sense in which the world ministers prophetically to the church: by hungering and



thirsting for righteousness when the church is surfeited with comfort, by striving to make peace while the church is blessing those who would make war. For whom will it be more tolerable on the day of judgment? Or will the church have the eyes of its understanding open to the great riches of Christ among all peoples, and the mighty works which he performs where and as he will? Christ is able to do this, and he does this incognito; the world, unknown to itself, is the sphere of his activity. One thing, however, is lacking. Who he is and what he does must be acknowledged, pointed out, announced, proclaimed, and heralded. They who believe and do this are the Church.

In the subsequent sections of this chapter we propose to reflect upon some aspects of the two crucial problems of contemporary world politics: the questions of war and peace, and those of abundance and poverty. These two complex sets of problems are, of course, inseparable, and it is especially true that the way in which one sees the former will strongly influence one's orientation toward the latter. It is, in fact, true to say that he who considers imminent war as probable and unavoidable might just as well ignore the challenge posed by the economically underdeveloped countries. If we choose, however, not to abandon all hope and effort for peace, then we are obliged to face squarely the complex interrelationships of riches and misery.

Before tackling our main problems, let us formulate a brief overview of the international political scene in this third quarter of the twentieth century. We are faced with at least four fundamental realities and four corresponding political options, all inextricably interrelated.

The first of these realities is *the rivalry of two superpowers*. A hundred years ago the existence of a West European hegemony was the fundamental fact; today it is the coexistence of two great and competing power blocs which is fundamental. The nucleus of each of these blocs, in turn, is a young, expanding, vigorous nation, the very dynamism and resources of which draw into its orbit, whether willingly or unwillingly, a certain number of collaborators, and drive it to seek to extend its influence to a much

wider circumference. The rivalry between the two centers of power is a given. The political option is whether this rivalry shall continue to be conceived of primarily in military terms, or whether greater emphasis shall be given to socioeconomic competition. Of course, the latter is far from absent in the current situation, and even after the suggested reorientation, the former could not, in our view, be entirely eliminated. It is a question of priority.

A second reality of the present historical conjuncture is *the genocidal nature of nuclear war*. In the past it has been possible to conceive of war as the pursuit of politics by violent means. But such is the destructiveness of the weapons which would inevitably be used in World War III, and so extensive is the stockpiling on the part of both superpowers, that the end could only be mutual prostration, mutual exhaustion of resources, the chaos and the disintegration of present civilization.

We must get this straight: the only world which could emerge from the next global war would be a world sick unto death, mutilated beyond recognition. The co-genocidal nature of nuclear war is a given. The question remains whether it is better to die than to be alive in a world where Communists, on the one hand, or capitalists, on the other, are also alive. Are the two rivals so utterly in despair that the only conceivable way of facing up to the challenge is to move toward mutual annihilation, like Samson leaning on the pillars of the house of Dagon? The alternative—the one and only alternative—is to tear ourselves free from our fascination with atomic weaponry and to turn resolutely toward the reduction of tensions through conciliatory acts aimed at facilitating negotiation and mutual concession. Of course, as the situation now stands, there are partisans of negotiation on both sides, and in the event that the counsel of compromise should prevail, this still would not, of necessity, indicate any great degree of fraternization. But the political choice must be made between lethal hostility and conciliatory negotiation.

A third reality which we must consider is *the ambivalent promise of scientific technology*. The phenomenal expansion of scientific knowledge and its uses during the last several decades have opened before us unlimited prospects of modifying nature on

man's behalf. These transformations, however, are not necessarily beneficial, as has been revealed to our dismay by the monstrous nuptials of science and juggernaut. Nor are there lacking other examples of these negative potentialities: the pollution of man's natural habitat, the increasing polarization of affluence and misery, and so forth. The power of science and its products to harm or to bless is a given. Human catastrophe and human betterment, each on an unprecedented scale, are within our reach. But we can scarcely have it both ways. The claim that we can first choose the former and then settle down to enjoy the latter must be unmasked for the lie that it is. A decision must be made as to whether or not we are ready for those radical political changes which alone would make it possible to plan rationally and wholeheartedly for the welfare of humanity. If this is the criterion, then it is evident how bankrupt we are in positive policies. We (in this case, the United States) do not even know what to do with agricultural surpluses (this we readily admit); but neither do we (both the United States and the Soviet Union) know what to do with the extraordinary potency released from the atom (though we think we know what we are obliged to do first, and promise the world that later on we will devote ourselves to constructive tasks). The default in positive planning leaves us prey to fear and irresponsibility. Of course, the alternatives in this sphere, as in any other human sphere, are not black and white. The presumption that, through science, man may eventually control the total human environment for total human welfare is a dangerous illusion. The political option in respect to scientific research and development is simply this: whether to give priority to inhumanity or to humanity.

We consider one other reality to be fundamental to a proper understanding of the present world scene: *the impatience of the majority of the nations of the world*. Peoples who yesterday sat in hopeless misery have now awakened to a new sense of their dignity as human beings. Yet, without power to redress the situation, they see their real interests fatally compromised by the quarrel between Moscow and the NATO allies. More than half of the human race refuses to believe that all global problems may



be reduced to the one common denominator of the struggle between Western liberalism and Soviet collectivism. "Our enemy is poverty and a stagnant economy," they would say to us. "Our enemy is also your quarrel itself, which not only threatens continually to break out in our front yard, but also diverts and distorts any positive intentions which you may have in our regard." This widespread disavowal of the Soviet-Western conflict as the primary issue facing all nations is an axiom of world politics. But since politics is dominated by those who have the power to make decisions and the authority to marshal resources, the question remains as to what is to be done about this protest.

If the goal of the politics of the two great powers is to push steadily and with determination toward a military showdown, the whole world becomes nothing more than a strategy and logistics map for the military, and all nations must be enticed, cajoled, bought, or blackmailed into one military camp or the other. If, on the contrary, this goal were to be redefined, in a spirit of recaptured sanity, as the achievement of a series of negotiated agreements, then the economic advancement of the peoples of the underdeveloped world could be conceived and planned in terms of their own human and economic needs; and their aspiration for a share in the world's abundance could be understood not only as legitimate in itself, but also as the one great challenge most worthy of absorbing the technical and human resources of mankind in the latter half of the twentieth century. Both views are being expressed today. A fundamental political option is involved.

In this brief tour of the horizon there has obviously been no room for doubt as to which of the alternatives we believe should take priority. Indeed, we feel impelled toward these alternatives by the demands of the gospel of resurrection. The world and its history are subject to the power of the risen Christ who exercises authority *de jure* and *de facto* among all peoples in every corner of the globe. This authority, to be sure, is contested by the forces of darkness. Michael and the dragon are said to wage total war in heaven. There are those who profess to see on earth the counterpart of this absolute contest in what they interpret as the conflict between the Free World and Communist tyranny. But the defeat

of the dragon and his angels will be consummated not by men, but by Christ, who indeed has already struck the fatal blow. And the earthly counterpart of the cosmic struggle is to be found in the heart of every man, in the life of every people, in the structures of all nations, in the values of all cultures. In consequence, the pretension of any earthly power to be entrusted with the ultimate vindication of right is a presumption which perverts its own most just and constructive efforts, and which leads inevitably to its own chastisement.

To be sure, although all earthly powers are ambivalent, a given nation or civilization may be, for a provisional time and in a limited measure, the bearer of man's future. Nevertheless, there is no confirmation of this, apart from the positive unfolding of the creative vocation of a nation or a culture to the end that its superior humanism may become evident and may prevail. To choose to compete with weapons of annihilation is to make an evil pact with those forces which in Christ are destined to be engulfed in nothingness. Any effort of man to manipulate these powers of death can only be considered as rebellion against the Lord of life who works for the restoration of all things and the uniting of all men in himself. The obliteration of vast segments of the human family can scarcely be a step toward the reconciliation of all things, toward the elevation of all mankind to the dignity of the liberty of the children of God. The risen Christ is present among men to fulfill the deep longing of his entire creation.

These are but some of the considerations which the gospel of the resurrection of Jesus Christ proclaims to us. It is on their strength that we may dare to declare ourselves in the political sphere for the transformation of military hostility into socio-economic competition, for the renunciation of weapons of annihilation in favor of the tools of arbitration and negotiation, for the liberation of our scientific technology from its unholy alliance with the politics of inhumanity in order to concentrate on the problems of human welfare, and for the promotion of the underdeveloped countries from the status of pawns in the power struggle to that of respected partners in the use and development of the world's resources. Would we be justified in concluding that these positive



alternatives are certain to prevail in this present time? We do not believe that we are permitted to affirm this. The horror that human minds have conceived, human hands can carry out in defiance of the purpose of God. There looms before us the brutal threat of a global descent into atomic hell. Face to face with this dreadful eventuality, the Christian can only confess: He descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead. We cannot pretend to see beyond this.

But unless we believe that God has despaired of us and our contemporaries, and has reluctantly given man over, for the time being, to the full fury of his own willfulness, we must speak and act positively in the direction of the purpose of God made manifest in Christ. The peculiar politics of the church in a time such as ours will be touched upon at the end of this chapter, but we shall first concentrate upon certain questions pertaining to the prevention of nuclear war and the problems related to the economic development of the new nations.

## II WAR AND PEACE

It is a widely held conviction that given the current state of international affairs, the only effective means of avoiding war is the preparation for it. This conviction has given rise to what has been called the policy of "deterrence," and since the practice of both superpowers is similar in this regard, it has become the policy of the "balance of terror." In respect to definition, it may be asked whether "deterrence" indicates a permanent or only a temporary state; that is, whether it means prevention of war or merely its postponement. Unfortunately, we do not know the answer. But we may at least observe certain characteristics of the practice of this policy which will give us a strong indication of its probable ultimate consequences.

The policy involves, among other things, an all-out arms race and the mobilization of science and industry to this end; the testing of nuclear weapons; the promotion of the military to the inner circles of decision-making; and the invasion of politics, business,



science, the mass media, and public opinion in general by styles and habits of the military mind. Tied in with the policy of deterrence, especially in the United States, is a permanent war economy assuring considerable profits for corporations and wages for millions of workers. (It is estimated that one-tenth of the employed population in the United States is directly dependent on the military or on armament manufacture.) Integral to the practice of deterrence is a "tough" posture in foreign policy: declarations that our weapons can blow any and all enemies off the map, and propaganda to the effect that to yield, even an inch, to the enemy would mean disaster all around. This, in turn, plays into the hands of the right-wing extremists and the hysterical panic-peddlers, with their slogan, "This plague must be wiped off the face of the earth and we are the ones who can do it." The American government can do no more than frown officially on these extremists; any real countermeasure would involve a totally revised policy.

Finally, it is already apparent that, as our society becomes accustomed to the practices and the mentality which we have just outlined, its democratic spirit and institutions are undergoing profound alteration and deterioration. The way of life for which we are ready to fight at the peril of our lives is being eroded in the process of preparing to defend it. These ominous developments, to all appearances inspired by a doomsday fixation, are nevertheless dictated, so we are told, by prudence itself, and may be trusted as the sure guardians of peace and security.

It may be protested that we are grossly caricaturing the concept of deterrence, and we would quickly concede that *in intention* the partisans of deterrence, aside from an alarmingly heavy lunatic fringe, are not annihilationists. The advocates of "first-strike capacity" and of "preventive war" have not been, and are not now, in control. It is honestly believed that "second-strike capacity," which means "invulnerable" weapons to be used for massive retaliation, is the only way to survival and that it represents a moderate position which holds the door open to negotiation in case this should ever become a real possibility. It is our contention that, given the present tempo of the arms race, this

middle ground is exceedingly treacherous territory: first-strike and second-strike doctrines continually slip out of focus and tend to merge.

It was simple enough at the beginning. The possession of "the bomb" by one single nation was certainly a deterrent, not from that nation's own use of the bomb, to be sure, but from direct attack by any other nation. And Russia's achievement of "atomic status" represented, in the initial stage, a deterrent to an attack by either side. If negotiation had intervened at that point to produce an agreement halting atomic development for military purposes there and then, the situation today would be very different. However, the West failed to take seriously enough what this achievement revealed concerning the "backward" Soviets, and both sides, deciding to make a run for it, brought into existence the so-called balance of terror. This might be termed more accurately a seesaw rather than a balance, since deterrence is not static—it entails the continual necessity of redressing the balance through research and testing, threats and propaganda, and all the vertiginous history of preparedness over the last dozen years or so. By now this is familiar to us as the "process of escalation," and we are on this escalator not only technologically and economically, but also politically and psychologically. We desperately hope that the men at the controls of this gigantic escalator can go on forever functioning like flawless computers, without making a fatal mistake. But history warns us that militarism has generally found, or stumbled into, the war for which it prepares.

Let us consider in somewhat more detail the difficulties involved in attempting to define the policy of deterrence. This doctrine is extremely elusive and continually gives rise to contradictions and illusions, three of which we will indicate. First is the illusion "deterrence only—not use." President Dwight D. Eisenhower gave this view its classic formulation when he insisted that our nuclear force is "not to be used, but to make certain that the other fellow doesn't use his." Doubtless this is what the policy means to the average American. We are much too absorbed in the revolving circle of producing and consuming to consider taking time out for nuclear war. Meanwhile, those concerned about ethical implica-

tions have come to similar conclusions, approving the possession of nuclear weapons while condemning their use. But the ethical problem may not be postponed in this fashion. It is already present in the decision to research, test, and stockpile such weapons. Willingness to possess must imply willingness to use, if we are to talk about deterrence in any meaningful sense of the word. And whether we are happy or sad about their possible use, this in no degree modifies their potential destructiveness. Only a readiness to use could be conceived of as effectively deterring. In other words, the nuclear threat must be "credible." In order to be credible it must have massive means at its disposal, in the process of being constantly perfected, ready for instant use in a manner which ignores scruples and which can match horror for horror, and even better. Threat involves willingness or it is no threat. Yet we insist that the threat is for deterrence only.

In this fundamental contradiction the true face of the policy of deterrence shows itself. In principle, being a peace-loving people, we will not strike first. But any reluctance to strike, or any appearance of reluctance, would weaken credibility. To put it in ridiculous terms for a moment, the policy of deterrence would no longer be credible if we were to give the assurance that we would wait one hour after any "apparent" attack from the enemy in order to be sure that he meant it. Speaking seriously, credibility means convincing the enemy that we would not hesitate to retaliate immediately and massively; that, if possible, we would strike at the very same moment—and preferably a half-hour before! This might be called "pre-emptive retaliation," a term which would have the merit of combining idealism with realism. That is to say, while no one need fear that we of the West would attack first, and while no one could blame us for striking back when hit, nevertheless, in the event that we became convinced that "they" were about to attack, then we would hasten to strike just before they did. The nervous finger is poised on the button. This is the twisted logic made unavoidable in the process of escalation. This is the poisoned atmosphere of deterrence in which a miscalculation of an opponent's intentions, or a purely technical accident, or a temporary mental aberration on the part of someone at the



controls, would have incalculable consequences. It would be naive to imagine that this razor-edge tension could be maintained indefinitely. If we really mean to deter the use, then we shall have substantially to cut back the possession.

The realization of the contradiction in the "deterrence only" slogan has led some to argue that, since it may be necessary to resort to nuclear weapons in some degree at least, their use within certain limits must be considered permissible from an ethical standpoint. "Limited war with tactical atomic weapons" is a second illusion which bears investigation. There have, of course, been limited wars since the onset of the arms race, and in sensitive areas of the globe—the Korean war, for example, in which tactical nuclear arms were *not* used and which ended in stalemate because neither side was willing to run the risk and pay the price of a drive toward total victory. Another such example is the current military action in South Vietnam, the real goals of which are limited to maintaining the uneasy stalemate and keeping Diem from being overthrown. If it is a question of such peripheral engagements, and as long as these are the limits we are prepared to accept (no tacticals, no victory), then we may reasonably talk of limited war.

But our propaganda machine creates a different impression of what we are prepared to accept: the free world cannot rest until the captive peoples are liberated; the persisting Communist threat can be met only by keeping our nuclears dry, and so on. Indeed, we are not dreaming of stalemate, but of victory; and we are awakened in the early hours by nightmares of the Communist menace. In such an atmosphere, military engagements in critical areas strain at the leash of conventional weapons. Moreover, our so-called conventional forces are already equipped with tactical nuclear weapons. Occasions calling for their use will present themselves, such as when one side judges itself at a critical disadvantage. Nor must it be supposed that these weapons are harmless toy pistols; the Davy Crockett rocket, for example, is "designed to provide the foot soldier with a highly mobile weapon equal in firepower to massed heavy artillery." What are the situations in which such weapons could be used in limited war?

Would a tactical nuclear weapon, lobbed across to the mainland from Quemoy or Matsu, fit this category? Could tacticals defend West Berlin? Or if they were used to "clean up" the Viet Cong, would the operation remain limited? Everyone knows the answer to such questions. The fact is that tactical nuclear weapons are too potent to be used for limited objectives; they form part of the arsenal of all-out nuclear war. Even without them, limited war today is tricky business. For, given the universal presumptions of both superpowers, there are few points of the globe where both do not feel their interests directly at stake. While nuclear weapons, both tactical and strategic, are being perfected and stockpiled, this main conflict is being allowed to deteriorate. In such a situation, what limited war does not threaten to escalate into general war?

All right, say the grand strategists, let us admit that nuclear weapons are likely to be used, but let us prepare to use them only against the enemy's *weapons*, for then the enemy will undoubtedly respond in kind, since counterforce war is preferable to counter-population war. This strange sort of limited war is the brain child of certain U. S. Air Force strategists who have developed "counterforce theory." Since missiles are the target (if we follow their reasoning), our job is to outwit enemy missiles, which requires us to project the arms race indefinitely into the future. But this is all a matter of technology, so it shouldn't worry people. A science-fiction war of impersonal missiles is a comforting substitute for the indiscriminate annihilation of metropolitan areas. Of course, the counterforce strategists do not believe that *all* people will be spared; they estimate—in round figures—that some thirty million Americans might die in such a war, but this they consider "an acceptable loss." It really does sound reasonable enough, since it allows most people to go on with business as usual.

Or does it? Can we really separate people and weapons? And how rationally do people act under stress? Would a downpour of missiles on the eighteen installations around Tucson, Arizona (there are several hundred communities across the land with a missile base as a near neighbor), leave unconcerned the citizens of the surrounding areas? Will their anger flame up only against Communist missiles? Will they not demand that something be done



to the sort of regime which could conceive of firing such missiles? Assuredly, under such circumstances, we would not take it out on the missiles. These streamlined engines of slaughter have innocent electronic brains. If they explode, it is without malice. But where are the real culprits? One clean bomb on the Kremlin? Nonsense; the enemy is all over the place, from one end of the Communist world to the other. *Communism* must be torn up, root and branch: the whole system, systematizers and systematized, the entire socioeconomic structure and the way of life it produces. Such is the madness, which already finds a large audience before the missiles start flying. Whence would come the rationality, the moderation, the humaneness, once destruction began to descend from the skies? If the hideousness of our weapons is not presently sufficient to limit us in research and production, neither will their hideousness limit us (or the enemy) from all-out use, once passions are fully inflamed in the hour of terror. The battle of the missiles would not remain limited. At the top of the escalator, two warfare states would be locked in lethal embrace.

If we want to talk seriously about limited war—and it behooves us to want to—then we must realize how strict are the limitations (no nuclears—not even tacticals, no “victory”). Lest the major conflict get out of hand, we must now determine resolutely to cut across the incredibly soaring spiral.

We come to the third illusion; namely, that though general war may sooner or later be inevitable, *recovery is possible*. A considerable amount of effort is being expended in conditioning the American mind to accept nuclear war as likely, justifiable, and not *too* costly, if we prepare wisely and well. With enough fortitude and a wide distribution of radiation meters, we will get over it. The argument seems to imply that though *we* will get over it, the Communists won't; therefore the world will be a better place in which our children may bring up their children. This view is seen at its worst in Herman Kahn's abysmal book, *On Thermo-nuclear War*, which James R. Newman has called “the bible of the spokesmen for mass slaughter.” In reading this unbelievable book we learn that, if we play it right, we should be able to keep our casualties down to some forty million (or perhaps sixty mil-



lion) and that, of even greater interest, we may look forward to "normal and happy lives for the majority of survivors and their descendants." Numerical survival is the criterion; very little is said about the survival of moral and human values, or of a free democratic society—but this is no problem to the strategists of nuclear war, for these criteria are placed in brackets in order not to complicate their calculations of recovery potential.

Let it be clearly stated that "recovery" from thermonuclear war is no more meaningful than the terms "win" and "victory." It would seem that the American public has become aware of this by way of the dismal history of the fallout shelter program, a typically American story made possible by an overabundant economy. It is typical not only in its excesses, but also—thank God—in the common-sense reaction on the part of large sectors of the public who came to realize that they were being sold a bill of goods. Incidentally, if we speak in the past tense, it is not that we imagine the mirage to have been entirely dissipated, but that it is now being pursued without enthusiasm and without conviction. "Shelter life can be fun," was the general theme, and the advertisements told of happy families enjoying the comforts of their game-and-relaxation rooms, and emerging after many days, with a song on their lips, to engage in the challenge of reconstruction. This is one of those dreams which money can buy, but it is also a dream which reality would turn into a nightmare. It would have been honest of the salesmen to have pointed out that in a full-scale nuclear attack, few urban dwellers could be effectively protected; that, while deep shelters far enough away from ground zero would afford protection, the world into which survivors would emerge could not be guaranteed since the very atmosphere would pour down nuclear rain and the soil itself would be armed radioactively; that, even though the survivors might manage to get along by primitive means, they would have to struggle against hordes of bacteria and insects; and that, in any case, little if anything would be left of the way of life for which they had been willing to risk their all. Such frankness would undoubtedly be too much to expect from salesmen, but is it too much to expect from the government? The official leaders of the American people per-

mitted the illusion that effective protection for the majority could be devised, and that it would be possible to come out of a nuclear war, not unscathed certainly, but still alive enough to recover. This is the Big Lie—that nuclear war could be a means to a better world, to future peace, or to any kind of a decent human world at all. This is known to the leaders, but they are not speaking forth for the simple reason that the illusion that nuclear war does not necessarily mean the end for “our side” is part of the necessary morale-building, without which the credibility of our readiness to use the ultimate weapon could not be maintained.

The tomorrow of Kahn and like-minded strategists would mean a today in which we should have to be willing to be transformed into a society of moles, abjectly obedient to the Mole Elite. The Pentagon and the RAND Corporation would go underground; the White House and the Capitol building could stay where they are, since they would be outmoded anyhow in the new world to come. Recovery is possible, if you insist; but the question is, what sort of recovery and in what kind of a world?

These are some of the contradictions and illusions which inhere in the doctrine of deterrence. The “realists” would tell us, however, that we are simply not willing to face up to the awesome facts of life, and that without deterrence, United States foreign policy would be carried on from a position of weakness. As our answer to this realism we have a counter-realism to propose: (1) The belief that peaceful coexistence is impossible (which has as its corollary the direction of our major efforts on the potential total conflict) will tend toward its self-fulfillment. (2) Nuclear war, brought on by the escalation of distrust and of weapons, would be all-out war. (3) Such a war would mean at the very least the death, mutilation, or contamination of a sizable portion of the world population. (4) A high percentage of these casualties would be in the “advanced” societies to an extent which would render obsolete their present political and economic structures. (5) The ultimate and permanently expanding effects are wholly unpredictable, since nuclear war would strike enemies, friends, neutrals and ourselves, human dignity and decency, soil and atmosphere, flora and fauna, not only in this generation but

in generations yet to come. Alongside *this* realism, the realism of the cold-to-hot warriors is pure insanity. The so-called "position of strength" is the position of the dinosaur.

There is no live alternative to negotiation and compromise. But is not compromise with the Communists impossible, if not downright immoral? Those for whom the very word evokes suspicion would ask, "Was negotiation possible the Monday after Pearl Harbor? Would you have advocated compromising with Hitler?" Certainly not! But the contemporary situation is different: first, because of the nature of the only visible alternative to negotiation, namely, thermonuclear war; second, because Khrushchev is not Hitler, and communism is not nazism. We are aware that these latter statements raise fury in certain quarters, but they must nonetheless be affirmed clearly and calmly. As for nazism, the core of its internal logic was cynical, nihilistic, and destructive. From the point of view of the Western liberal political tradition, these elements are also present in communism. But present, too, are elements of a positive nature with which it is possible to enter into dialogue. In saying this, we reject any possible accusation that because we are willing to be something less than totally condemnatory in respect to communism, we are thereby indicating a desire to affiliate with, much less emigrate to, the Communist world. What we are saying is simply that black-and-white glasses do not enable us to see the situation as it is, and that the one word "tyranny" does not adequately sum up the whole of Soviet history since 1917. We are by no means denying, however, that the Soviet ascent was achieved only at a tremendous cost in human lives and values: the reality is scarcely consistent with its glorious claims; a tight dictatorship can never bring to an end the exploitation of man by man. Nevertheless, it is not necessary to renounce one's preference for the European liberal tradition in order to recognize the constructive aspects of the forced march, as well as a degree of liberalization in the post-Stalin era. Furthermore, if there were no assets on the balance sheet of communism, it would be most difficult to explain its profound appeal in many quarters of the non-Communist world.

Approaching the matter from the opposite angle, we would



emphasize that the negative ideology of anti-communism has been glaringly inept, and is now thoroughly bankrupt. The obsession with anti-communism has led to the rearmament of the aggressors of World War II; the one, doubtless, more willingly than the other. In at least one notorious case, it has promoted to a high NATO position a leading Hitler general. It has driven us into strange alliances with both pre-Hitler dictatorships, and post-Hitler dictatorships. Possibly the most imprudent aspect of our anti-Communist fixation has been the treating of one quarter of the population of the globe as bad school children, to be kept in the dunce's corner. American ignorance of what is going on in China, and Western opposition to the admission of China to the United Nations, are equally dangerous aspects of our policy. What price we will pay for this when China has achieved its tremendous potential is not comfortable to contemplate.

What we are saying is that negotiation with the Soviets—now—is possible, prudent, and necessary. We may be thankful that, for all its immense difficulties, it is with Khrushchev that we must deal, and not with the old-line Stalinists for whom any liberalization of the Soviet regime and tentative overtures toward the West are the betrayal of the revolution itself. Doubtless, Khrushchev would like to “bury” the West, but he has no illusions of being able to do this in an H-bomb crater. This form of burial is not considered essential to the Soviet leaders, for whom it is an article of faith that the Communist system will triumph through its greater economic and ideological potency. For this reason, Khrushchev is determined to avoid the ultimate showdown: to hold in check the Stalinists within, and the Maoists without, who deny the possibility of avoiding a hot war with “capitalist imperialism” and who pretend, at least in the latter case, that a real victory for communism would result.

This leads us to suggest that there exists a major deterrent to nuclear war which neither side is taking sufficiently into account. Official policy is based almost exclusively on a *minor* deterrent: steadily expanding nuclear arsenals, producing fear of attack and of reprisal. We refer to the latter as a minor deterrent because it is unstable and provocative, more likely to postpone than to pre-

vent. It intensifies distrust and suspicion. It deters attack, but increases desire to attack. There does exist a major deterrent which, in fact, constitutes the principal reason why nuclear war does not break out today or tomorrow. But if it is to be effective the day after tomorrow, it must now be made the presupposition of policy. *The major deterrent is that neither side really wants war.* How naive this sounds in the midst of the present hysteria. We both are certain that the "other side" will stop at nothing—not even all-out war—in order to have its way. Each side is convinced that it must, however reluctantly, prepare for the worst and possibly initiate it. And so, we must threaten each other; and fear angers us both and will turn us into madmen. But though there are admittedly partisans of inevitable war in both camps, they do not presently have the upper hand. The simple fact of the matter—childlike as it may sound—is that both peoples, though similarly trapped in compulsive cold-war reciprocity, at bottom really desire to avoid war. This is the deterrent which needs strengthening. An awareness of a mutual desire to live, of a common basic humanity underlying diversity, can give rise to a balance of hope, can perhaps initiate, while there is still time, an escalation of sanity.

This sentiment, we will be told, is all very noble, but where do we go from there? How can this awareness (admitting that it is not a delusion) be translated into concrete acts? We must negotiate? Very well, let us negotiate. Call the Soviets to another conference. But our mutual suspicions are such that these meetings of East and West turn out to be nothing more than occasions for mutual vituperation. We anticipate no evidence of desire to negotiate, we see none and we give none. Is there any way to halt this vicious merry-go-round? Shall we seek a mutual test ban as a starter? But we've been sparring over this inconclusively for a decade, with little candor or forthrightness on either side, giving the impression to all the world of being more fearful of agreement than of disagreement. In 1954, the West advanced a plan of phased disarmament; the Soviets would have none of it. In 1955, the Soviets reversed themselves and stated their readiness to prohibit both use and production of nuclear weapons, and to accept



international control. Did they mean it? The West did not probe to find out, but hastened instead to adjourn the conference. When the West came back, it was with an "open skies" proposal, but no disarmament. Since then, progress has been stymied by the dispute about which comes first: agreement to disarm, or agreement to control? Meanwhile, in 1958, East-West scientists concluded in joint consultation that a test ban could be effectively policed, and by the end of the year progress had been made on a treaty. Yet, after the intervening recess for the New Year, we came back with "new data" to show that underground explosions could escape detection. We now would accept nothing less than a foolproof system, and, at the end of 1959, Eisenhower declared that we considered ourselves at liberty to resume testing whenever we liked. During President John F. Kennedy's first year of office, some attempt was made to break out of the stalemate, but by now the Russians had backtracked. Russia resumed testing in the summer of 1961, and in subsequent talks withdrew all agreement to international inspection on her own soil: each side would monitor the other from its home base, and thus avoid temptation to engage in intelligence operations on the side. Whether or not Russia's fears of espionage are grounded, it is becoming clear that underground explosions so small as to escape present methods of detection have little military significance. The United States now seems ready to admit this, but has not given up the demand for some degree of international inspection, which Russia continues to reject.

Such is the dismal tale of a decade of disarmament discussions. Obviously, this is an oversimplified account, but the detailed version only fills out the same picture. The two superpowers are engaged in one more round of nuclear tests before seriously thinking about going on the wagon (a decision which, at this writing, they have made, with the exception of underground testing, which will presumably continue); but as anyone who has spent a night in the taverns can testify, this ultimate decision tends to be moderated a good many times. The pressures to which we have succumbed for this round will still be exerting themselves in favor



of renewed testing, in spite of the test ban agreement—unless a radical change is made.

What radical change? Should the United States proclaim, as the Soviet government has repeatedly done, that its goal is total universal disarmament? There would be nothing wrong with this, certainly; but, in our opinion, such a statement would have no particular value. The present, though unannounced, goal of the United States is absolute invulnerability. The announcement of another absolute—total disarmament—would be the same as seeking to go from one mountain peak to another mountain peak, without taking that first of the multitude of steps required to descend the first mountain in order to begin to climb the second. After all, it is a long, long way. So, for the moment, we prefer to remain where we are. Setting a goal of absolute disarmament has no necessary effect on the prosecution of the arms race. It is too “otherworldly” to have any grip on the concrete present.

The radical change which is needed is the unheroic one of selecting small, immediate, attainable, “this-worldly” goals, which would be no more than first steps—and then *actually taking those first steps!* The word followed by the deed would be most radical. Not “abolish all arms,” but begin to slow down the nuclear race; begin to put the brake on arms production, begin to reduce stock-piles and the military budget, begin to ease tensions, begin to conciliate, begin to seek constructive compromises in regard to world trouble spots, begin to recover integrity, begin to speak truth—unilaterally!

However, someone must begin. We are not in the position of two squabbling bullies in a back alley, who will probably survive to squabble again tomorrow and who, in any case, are only jeopardizing their own heads. We are both sitting atop a universal doomsday machine, dickering with the dials. Before disaster takes over, one of us must cautiously begin to get off—unilaterally—and urge the other to follow suit. In the West, diverse formulae of unilateral initiative are being proposed more and more frequently today, and, not unexpectedly, are dismissed out-of-hand by the decision-makers as the pipe dreams of soft-headed pacifists. But

aside from the fact that, in addition to some dreamy pacifists, there are also some very hard-headed pacifists whom it would be well to heed, we are not, in any case, speaking here of total unilateral disarmament. We are advocating a *unilateral beginning*. And in the light of the ominous perils of escalation, a prudent version of unilateralism represents, in our view, the realism of those who desire to obtain for the world the chance of survival. The balance of terror has completely immobilized both camps. Mutually obsessed with distrust, we are rigid and stiff-necked, unable to make any frank gesture of conciliation. The arms race is a double escalator carrying us inexorably toward a fatal rendezvous. Calling conferences on the way up has certainly not decreased the momentum. Somebody get off! Seize the initiative! Recover liberty of action!

If our analysis has been at all correct to this point, then the sanest first action which the United States could take would be the unequivocal announcement of a permanent American test ban. If the West had taken this initiative in the late summer of 1961, its effect on world opinion, and especially on that of the non-aligned nations, would have been enormous. It is to be hoped that by the time these words appear in print, the present test series having been completed on both sides, the horror of what we are both doing will have struck us. However that may be, what could the West lose by such a decision? For, in terms of "adequate" explosive potential, we have certainly gone beyond the stage where testing is necessary. We presently possess an atomic stockpile more than sufficient to make Hiroshimas of all cities in the Communist orbit. On the authority of eminent physicists—Lapp, Bethe, and others—testing is no longer a technical necessity, but a power symbol and a morale-builder. Sanity demands that we stop tests, halt production, cut back stockpiles, close some overseas bases. But would we not be taking an enormous risk? Would not the Kremlin interpret such acts as symptoms of an enfeebled will to resist? This is highly improbable; for, with their knowledge of our "overkill" capacity, how could the Soviets imagine the term "weakness" to be appropriate? If we stopped further production of Polaris missiles, we would still have a good hundred



roaming about in deep ocean. If we cut back nuclear stockpiles by one-half, we would be able to incinerate all "enemies" several times over. If we closed a dozen of our missile bases ringing the Soviet bloc, we would still have more than enough bases for any conceivable objective.

The real risk is not that in taking such first steps we would render ourselves irreparably weak. The real risk is that, should we enter resolutely upon the unilateral path, the Russians might not reciprocate. This must be faced. It is a risk to be weighed against the present risks of an accelerating arms race. If we were sure that the Kremlin harbored a nest of wicked conspirators whose one and only goal was the domination of the globe by fair means or foul, by multiple genocide if necessary, and even at the risk of co-genocide, then the alternatives would be starkly polarized: either the total warfare state preparing total war, or organized nonviolent resistance. But it is our conviction that such would be a gross misreading of the signs of the times. Less fearful choices are still open to us. The Russians, though their interests and values are not the same as those of the West, have no less a desire to live than do we; their present leaders, if not from good will at least from prudence, are as ready for moderation as are ours; they are equally conscious that we are all flirting with disaster; they, too, would welcome the opportunities offered by reduced tensions, though wanting no more than we to lose face in the process; they are at least as certain as we are that theirs is the superior system, and that socioeconomic competition would prove it to the world; they are increasingly more sensitive to the demands for a higher level of living within their own society. There is every likelihood that they would eventually reciprocate our conciliatory actions.

Unilateral decisions are not unheard of: for several years, both sides unilaterally refrained from testing. We have unilaterally followed a "no-nuclear, no-victory" policy in such places as South Vietnam, a fact already pointed out. Likewise, political compromise, if rare, has not been entirely lacking. We have already tried it. Take Laos, for example, where the United States found itself in the rather strange posture of withholding its \$3 million monthly



allowance in order to force a pro-American rightist regime to come to terms with an avowed Communist element within a neutralist-led government. Unilateralism and compromise are not bad words. They do not call for cowardly acts. They do not indicate softness on communism. They could become the liberating gestures of international behavior.

Professor Osgood's ingenious proposal, which he calls "graduated reciprocation in tension reduction," deserves to be read, reread, and pondered. A schedule of tension-reducing unilateral steps should be set up, modified, and extended as time goes on, according to the response they elicit—including disarmament moves, offers of political compromise, and liberalizing proposals in economic, scientific, and cultural fields. Each step should be publicized and internationally observed, and reciprocal Soviet (and Chinese) action invited. In Osgood's words: "Maintaining a series of unilateral, tension-reducing acts [would produce] a cumulative pressure toward reciprocation." The first steps at which we have hinted are obviously a long way from peace, but they would contribute toward the creation of a favorable atmosphere in which to bring about a state of continual negotiation and mutual compromise.

### III POVERTY AND ABUNDANCE

Simultaneously, the Western nations should grasp with utmost seriousness the opportunity of massively assisting the underdeveloped world. The late Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, spokesman for India's untouchables, once said, "The misery of the Indian masses is not new: it is as old as the world. What is new is that the people of India are beginning to grow impatient with their misery."

We have already advanced the thesis that one of the four fundamental realities of contemporary world politics is the common determination of the world's dispossessed peoples to enter into their full inheritance as human beings. If this is not accomplished with the encouragement and assistance of the West, an eventual attempt will be made to achieve it, let us make no mistake, against

the West. But this either-or dilemma is not of their own choosing; it is one of the deplorable results of the cold war, which has blinded us to the fact that the majority of the underdeveloped nations object to being forced into *either* camp. The challenge to the West is whether or not it is capable, in co-operative consultation with the peoples concerned, of devising a method of development, less costly in human terms than the Communist method, which would assist and guide the deprived nations in their effort to overcome poverty and economic stagnation.

We can scarcely be optimistic in the face of this challenge. Indeed, up to now we have been unwilling to admit the embarrassing facts of massive poverty and the dimensions of the task involved. The following paragraphs will attempt to outline five basic facts which we believe any adequate evaluation and program must take into account. It will be noted that these facts are "relational," which is to say that the state of "underdevelopment," as revealed by the cumulative evidence of these facts, results not only from internal factors, but also from interaction with, and the irresponsible behavior of, industrialized economies. A second preliminary observation: Although the various regions of the globe obviously present a great diversity of characteristics, it is nevertheless possible to abstract certain common features which permit us to make generalizations concerning "advanced economies" and "underdeveloped economies," the latter grouping representing roughly two-thirds of the total world population.

1. *The contemporary world is divided into a minority sector of abundance, and a majority sector of poverty.* One would like to be told that well-being is a ladder on which the nations of the world are distributed from bottom to top, and on all rungs in between. "This is the way life is," we would tell ourselves. The real situation, however, is one of sharp contrast between those who have "bread enough and to spare," and those who "perish with hunger." Indeed, the criterion of food consumption brings out the most serious aspect of this contrast. While the Anglo-Saxon peoples consume better than 3,000 calories per person each day, two-thirds of the peoples of the globe consume less than the

basic minimum of 2,500 calories. A second vital criterion by which to indicate the contrast is that of energy consumption, which defines a nation's power to transform natural resources. Converting all forms of energy into their equivalence in kilograms of coal, the "minority sector" (Anglo-Saxon countries, Western Europe, Soviet Union) consumes per capita per year some 3,660 kilograms; the "majority sector," 190 kilograms. A third criterion is that of national income per capita. For roughly one-half of the world's population, this figure comes to less than \$100; for certain industrialized nations, the figures are as follows: Soviet Union, \$818; France, \$1,204; Britain, \$1,346; Canada, \$1,989; United States, \$2,790. Despite the obvious difficulties of evaluating the national product of nonindustrialized countries, it is undeniable that in this respect also, an enormous gap separates them from the developed nations. In fact, one-seventh of the world's population accumulates two-thirds of the world's income.

2. *The gap between rich nations and poor nations continues to widen at a rapid pace.* One would like to be told that poverty in the modern world is an anachronism which is slowly but surely being eliminated. "Things are bound to get better," we would tell ourselves. But the statistics categorically forbid any such optimism; for while the rich nations enjoy a continuous rhythm of expansion, the economies of the poor nations proceed by fits and starts without ever really getting off the ground. Thus the gap widens. For example, in 1938, the per-capita income in India compared with that in the United States was in a ratio of 1 to 15. Today the ratio is 1 to 40. This is a race between the Model-T and the Thunderbird. The per-capita capacity of monetary investment of the underdeveloped world, as compared with that of the industrialized world, is now in a ratio of something like 1 to 200; at the present rate, in two decades or so the ratio will be something like 1 to 350.

Let us look at the widening gap from another point of view. While farm surpluses become an ever more perplexing problem in the West, in the poorer nations food production *per inhabitant*



has scarcely improved over prewar levels, and in Asia it has dropped below those levels. This spells hunger and malnutrition on a vast scale. In 1960, according to the FAO, while world agricultural production increased by 1 per cent, world population advanced by 1.6 per cent; the center of this population increase is, and continues to be, in the underdeveloped world. The reason for this is not, generally speaking, a rising birth rate, but a rapid decline in mortality due to the worldwide diffusion of the benefits of medical science. Such is the momentum of demographic expansion that, according to the "moderate hypothesis," the population of the world will double by the year 2000. However, here again the widening gap is evident from the fact that the industrialized world will experience only a 53 per cent increase, in contrast to a 146 per cent augmentation in the underdeveloped world, the combined populations of which will comprise at that time 77 per cent of the global population.

The life-and-death contest between food and population is the one crucial issue, beyond that of the prevention of nuclear war, with which we *should* be occupied in the next decades. We would do well to heed the warning of Josué de Castro that the world will soon be divided into two opposing camps: those who suffer from hunger *vs.* those who suffer from insomnia, the latter fearful of the revolt of the former. Is there any hope of avoiding catastrophe, through either a decrease in the birth rate or an increase in the rate of economic development, a major aspect of which is increased food production? In respect to the former, the principal overpopulated countries have already officially adopted policies favorable to birth control. But we must realize that this can be only *one* element in a total complex of planned development, and can begin to take effect only subsequent to a substantial improvement in the general standard of living. Even the *idea* cannot be conceived by the masses, apart from this experience and incentive. Tradition-bound, illiterate couples, living in misery and possessing nothing, have nothing to lose from having a large family; moreover, such a family is considered an ideal and a duty. Reduced natality can only be a product, and not a cause, of economic de-

velopment in the initial period. In any case, because of the "inertia of demographic phenomena," the present population curve is imprinted on the immediate future.

The only hope for the emerging nations lies in rapid economic development. Yet formidable obstacles block this path: the disadvantageous position of the new nations in respect to economic expansion, the inequities of current international trade, and the inadequacies and shortcomings of Western aid programs.

3. *The dispossessed nations aspiring to economic development today are at a disadvantage in comparison with the Western nations in their comparable era of industrial revolution.* One would like to believe that if the peoples of the underdeveloped countries would only do as we did, their problems could be solved. "Heaven helps those . . ." we would tell ourselves. The fact is, however, that the situation with which these countries are faced today has little in common with the occidental experience of economic development, and, to the contrary, is rather more onerous. The sequence which obtained in the West, namely, a rising standard of living followed by a decline in mortality rate, is practically reversed in the underdeveloped countries where, as we have already noted, the sharp decline in mortality has no correlation with an improvement of the living standard. Furthermore, in the Western experience the progress of capital accumulation and industrial expansion, animated by an adventurous entrepreneurial class, preceded the generalization of welfare benefits. This sequence is once again reversed in many of the new nations, where the wealthy classes tend to be oriented not toward constructive investment, but toward speculation, luxury spending, and hoarding; where the level of investment capital is feeble; and where the principle of the welfare state constitutes an integral part of the promise of independence. Although welfare benefits represent a heavy and rapidly augmenting load on fragile national budgets, so miserable is the level of the masses that it cries out for immediate improvement.

In the West, economic development took place in symbiosis with sociopsychological transformations—the conjunction studied by Weber, Sombart, and many others. In contrast to this organic

internal maturation, the process of modernization in underdeveloped countries runs counter, more often than not, to traditional mores and rigid social structures, and, in consequence, the "social cost" of this process is a profoundly traumatic experience. Moreover, the countries of the early industrial revolution had practically achieved political integration before undertaking the task of economic modernization, whereas both tasks must be assumed simultaneously in most of the new nations. And, finally, for those countries first to survive on the scene, much of the rest of the world at that time was like an open frontier which could be organized in terms of the needs of their own expanding economies. Today, the newly liberated peoples aspiring to economic development find no underdog upon whose shoulders they may climb to success. They themselves are the underdogs, and the dominant economies have colossal stakes in the status quo.

The difficult goal of self-sustained economic growth cannot therefore be achieved by the new nations without vigorous and wise over-all planning, and without the galvanizing into constructive activity of their vast resources of underemployed manpower. Indeed (though within the limits of this chapter we can no more than allude to the problem), in many of the underdeveloped countries much more radical action is called for. Frequently, economic development is hampered by self-interested leaders who do not choose to implement agrarian reform, to eliminate corrupt and exploitative intermediaries between the peasants and their markets, to force savings into constructive investment, and so forth. But internal effort, even at its optimum, cannot be sufficient to overcome the disadvantages which we have been discussing; consequently, the situation demands, in the first place, basic transformation of the economic relations between rich and poor nations, and, second, massive financial and technical aid.

4. *The precarious position of the underdeveloped economies is closely linked to the advantageous position of the industrialized economies.* One would like to be told that our good fortune is simply the reward of our own efforts, and that, consequently, no particular obligation to less fortunate peoples is involved. "And anyway," we would tell ourselves, "the more food on the table



the more crumbs will fall." But this rule-of-thumb appears inapplicable to the sphere of international trade. Gunnar Myrdal, taking issue with the assumption that trade automatically benefits both parties, points out that, when carried on in terms of the free play of the market, trade between industrialized and non-industrialized economies tends to reinforce the causes of stagnation and regression in the latter, while awarding the lion's share of economic gain to the former. Furthermore, the underdeveloped countries find that the externally controlled economic enclaves which thrive on their territories bring little benefit to their total economies. These are two of the aspects of what is being called "neo-colonialism," and the menace is by no means unreal.

Here we begin to see more clearly the relational aspects of the phenomena of underdevelopment. The close connection between affluence and stagnation is abundantly illustrated from the present situation in respect to the question of "terms of trade." For the underdeveloped countries, the terms of trade determine the volume of raw materials which must be exported in order to import a certain quantity of manufactured goods. The year 1961 saw a decline for the fourth successive year in the average price of primary commodities, and, simultaneously, a further increase in the average price of manufactured goods moving in international trade. The net result is that the "buying power" of these countries has now reached its lowest point since 1950. But one man's poison is another man's meat, and the corresponding improvement in trade for the industrialized countries has meant, considering only the years 1953-58, a net gain of approximately \$1 billion.

Another aspect of the precarious position of the underdeveloped economies is that of the violent fluctuations to which the prices of these primary commodities are subject on the world market. For example, during the moderate recession of 1957-58, with its consequent drop in demand for raw materials, the underdeveloped economies suffered a loss in export earnings (and thus in capacity to import industrial and agricultural equipment) of several billion dollars. A more specific case: during the Suez crisis, a fall of 60 per cent in the price of copper on the world market meant for Chile a loss of \$240 million. As with Chile, the budgets of most of the underdeveloped countries depend on the export

of one or two primary commodities, a situation which exposes their entire economy to the whims of the world market. The *sine qua non* of economic development in the poorer nations is the stabilization of the market prices of raw materials by means of an international regulatory fund. Of equal importance in those countries is the development of diversified production and exportation, supported by long-term contracts with the industrialized nations.

The full urgency of the reform of the modalities of international trade is thrown into sharp relief when it is pointed out that the over-all gain accruing to the dependent economies from the total volume of foreign aid being received is, over time, wiped out by the loss resulting from the fluctuations of the market and the devaluation of the terms of trade. Indeed, the interrelationships of riches and misery are complex and disquieting.

5. *The present measures of aid and assistance on the part of the advanced economies are inadequate, both in volume and conception, to the task of making a decisive contribution to the economic development of the dependent economies.* One would like to be told that our foreign aid efforts are an inspiring example of the generosity of the rich nations, and of their determination to share widely the benefits of their abundance. "But even so," we would complain to ourselves, "what thanks do we get?" The facts of the matter are that, comparing world needs with the resources of the rich nations, our aid efforts are feeble and un-co-ordinated, and, moreover, we definitely have something else on our minds. In this latter respect, it is not clear that what we want in these countries is economic development *for its own sake*. Speaking especially for the United States, it may be stated baldly that our anti-Communist preoccupation overshadows all other considerations. President Kennedy, speaking of foreign aid at a recent press conference, pleaded for a recognition that "this program is vital for national security," in support of which thesis he added that assisted countries "are in the direct line of fire." This expresses succinctly and without camouflage the real motive behind our foreign aid programs. By way of illustration, we may point to the 1957 figures which reveal that the amount of American



aid awarded to Formosa, South Korea, and South Vietnam combined, was equal to the amount allotted to the rest of the non-Communist underdeveloped world comprising a total population twenty-nine times that of the three favored countries. It would be difficult to support the contention that the \$2 billion which have been poured into South Vietnam, for example, represent an unambiguous illustration of a single-minded purpose to promote economic growth.

Aid must be liberated from its role as a narrowly conceived political weapon: buying votes or subsidizing mercenaries is not aid. Furthermore, piecemeal handouts must be replaced by long-term contracts at low interest rates. In addition, the present ratio between bilateral and multilateral aid (7 to 1 for all Western aid combined) should be substantially modified in favor of the latter. Audacious United Nations projects, such as SUNFED, could then be taken out of the files and put back on the workbench. The advantage of internationally controlled aid is that it provides a salutary screen between donor and beneficiary nations. Within such a framework, the formula "no strings attached" could be seen as not entirely adequate. Aid administered through the United Nations—and its use supervised—would offer to a beneficiary nation "the supplementary service of hindering it from wasting what it receives," in the words of Pierre Moussa.

What about the desirable volume of aid? The question of volume may be stated in these terms: What amount of external capital is needed (after subtracting the potential volume of internal investment) in order to raise the national product of the underdeveloped countries by  $x$  per cent? We should first remind ourselves that in view of the over-all rate of demographic expansion in the underdeveloped world (roughly 2.5 per cent), even the maintenance of the present level of the national product per capita will require considerable investment, and, without doubt, a greater external contribution than the current figures show. But this is simply "keeping afloat" and does not make any progress toward self-sustained economic growth. The rhythm of expansion necessary to attain this goal is on the order of 5 per cent or more per year. If the advanced economies are to make a decisive contribution toward this goal, the volume of their aid must be at



least doubled, and probably tripled. To put this in perspective, it should be emphasized that the total of all public aid to underdeveloped economies amounted, in 1961, to not more than 5 per cent of the total world military budget (\$6 billion compared with \$120 billion). This comparison might also suggest a source of finance.

As for the United States, Congress recently appropriated for a fiscal year \$2.4 billion for foreign economic assistance. A comparative study of the national incomes of the share in advanced nations would indicate that the proportionate American share in an adequate aid program would amount to upward of \$7 billion. Once again, comparative figures will help place this in perspective: our GNP (Gross National Product) for 1961 was \$513 billion; the Congress approved for 1962-63 a defense budget of \$48 billion; estimates of the cost of the moon-shot vary from \$20 to \$40 billion; and who is to compute the waste, extravagance, and useless expenditures on the part of the American citizen? Money is available, but if any sizable portion of it is to be reallocated to the task of economic aid, new attitudes must be brought to bear.

If the purpose of the Western nations is to make a contribution to that underprivileged two-thirds of mankind of such dimensions as to enable them to reach the take-off point into self-sustained economic expansion, then until now we have only been playing at the game. If we desire the ends, we must consent to the means. No doubt "Food for Peace" and other surplus-sharing programs have an important first-aid function. They temporarily modify the effects, but they do not attack the causes of economic stagnation. The means required to *this* end—insofar as the collaboration of the advanced economies is concerned—involve both massive financial and technical aid, and a radical transformation of the trade relations between rich and poor nations.

It must be made clear that we are dealing in this discussion with mutually exclusive political policies: the pursuance of the cold war, and the furtherance of the economic development of the disadvantaged nations, are goals which contradict one another. As long as the United States gears its economy to the arms race, it will not really launch into a program for meeting world economic needs. It is not primarily that the price of the combined programs

would be too high; it can even be argued that we are *economically capable* of bearing the burden of such a combination. Politically and psychologically, however, the arms race and the peace race are totally incompatible. It is impossible to raise the mailed fist and extend the fraternal hand at one and the same time. (The Soviets are no more ambidextrous in this respect than the West). A fundamental political option is involved.

Even were we to combine a superior dollar with a superior bomb, we would still lose out in the end. Our aid would continue to be conceived narrowly—as no more than a supplementary way of keeping the pressure on the Communist bloc, with the goal of its eventual disintegration and the universalization of the American way of life. This cold-war conception of its function renders our aid program suspect in much of the underdeveloped world, and sometimes diverts our support to reactionary and corrupt regimes. Were we to decide, without an accompanying change in outlook, to double or triple its volume, our program would still be discredited and vitiated. The arms race promotes an attitude of indifference toward the underdeveloped nations, except insofar as we consider them to be “strategically” important. From the point of view of our current politics of inhumanity, these peoples are, to be frank, no more than pawns in the power struggle. It is illusory to imagine that we can become seriously concerned with the needs and aspirations of the world’s peoples, and that we can learn to treat them as respected partners in the use and development of the world’s resources, without our undergoing radical conversion to a new politics of humanism. The politics demanded by the resurrection is one which would choose to compete with the power of a superior humanism.

#### IV THE PECULIAR POLITICS OF THE CHURCH

In concluding this chapter, we have one last promise to keep, namely, the promise to touch upon the peculiar politics of the church in relation to the questions which we have just discussed. Quite obviously, however, this discussion has not been characterized by positions peculiar to the church, but rather by positions



held in common with many others. And certainly the first thing to be said is that Christians should audaciously and decisively join hands with all those who strive for peace and human welfare, no matter the hue or the persuasion. To be sure, the pattern, as we have called it, by which the Christian is guided drives him in certain directions and not in others, gives him a bias in favor of certain types of alternatives and in opposition to others; but the judgments and decisions toward which he is thus oriented do not necessarily isolate him from all other evaluations of the situation, nor do they oblige him to arrive at unique conclusions.

There is a common ethical task for all those who would serve peace and human solidarity. In matters of war and peace, the ethical task is not to define the circumstances under which further atomic testing is justified, the degree of massacre which would be acceptable, the limits within which nuclear war may be waged. The ethical task is stubbornly to resist the genocidal course of present military strategy, to strive toward the reversal of the arms race and toward the establishment of just peace. Peace is the ethical task! In regard to questions of abundance and poverty, it is presumed in certain circles that a brand-new ethical problem has recently developed, namely: "How can we live creatively with abundance?" However, to pose the question in this way is to side step the real ethical quandary which we may state thus: "How does it happen that although we have never prospered more, the majority of mankind exists at a level of deprivation?" The ethical task in these matters is how to persuade men of power and authority of the urgency of a radical re-evaluation of our politics in respect to the underdeveloped world.

If these are the anxieties, the concerns, the tasks of men of many persuasions, *how much more* are they the anxieties, the concerns, the tasks of the church with its peculiar vision of man, of his world, and of his history. If men in the name of humanism are content, in the cause of peace, to be called fools and visionaries and traitors, *how much more* the church, to whom has been entrusted the ministry of reconciliation. If men in the name of science are impelled to pledge themselves to a "supranational loyalty of scientific elites," in protest against militarism and chau-



vinism, *how much more* the church, that new nation among nations, is called to be the provisional representative of the new humanity, motivated by the universalism of God! The distinctive characteristic of the church is to be found in this *how much more*—not of its performance, surely, but of its responsibility. The peculiar, and annoying, politics of the church arises from its acknowledgment of the risen Christ at the right hand of God. Despite the church's reluctance to speak of this in public, the event itself drives the church to call this to the world's attention. Does the world today have cause to suspect that the reason for the existence of the church—a rather curious institution—is to make known the occurrence of the unprecedented fact of the raising of this man from the dead, and, in consequence, to proclaim the message of universal peace and reconciliation in and through him?

Do we not, in fact, take with too easy a conscience what should be recognized as an ironical phrase, "the historic peace churches"?—a tacit admission that, although many Christians are witnessing for peace with courage and lucidity, the main body of Christians has not been an undeniable factor for peace and reconciliation on the strength of Christ's resurrection. Yet it is of this that the church is called to be a sign.

The church is peculiar in that it recognizes one universal power and authority, taking priority over all others. The church is a sign and a witness by its very obstinacy in believing what it believes. The church believes that Christ has dominion over death and life, over the world and its history, over things present and things to come. Does it not also believe that he has dominion over economic systems and political powers? Has man any cause hopelessly to grasp things in his own hands, hysterically to prepare for mutual annihilation? We have pleaded in these pages for a realism which turns resolutely away from destruction and despair, and confidently toward humanism and hope. Beyond this, the church witnesses to Christian realism by taking seriously the universalism of God and the sovereignty of the risen Christ.

## Comments

1. (p. 6) "Now in the night whereon the Lord's day dawned, as the soldiers were keeping guard two by two in every watch, there came a great sound in the heaven, and they saw the heavens opened and two men descend thence having a great light, and drawing near unto the sepulchre. And that stone which had been set on the floor rolled away of itself and went back to the side, and the sepulchre was opened and both of the young men entered in. . . . They saw again three men come out of the sepulchre, and two of them sustaining the other and a cross following after them. And of the two (they saw) that their heads reached unto heaven, but of him that was led by them that it overpassed the heavens. And they heard a voice out of the heavens saying: Hast thou preached unto them that sleep? And an answer was heard from the cross, saying: Yea. Those men therefore took counsel one with another to go and report these things unto Pilate. And while they yet thought thereabout, again the heavens were opened and a man descended and entered into the tomb . . . and they told all that they had seen, and were in great agony, saying: Of a truth he was the son of God" (Gospel of Peter, 35 ff). Greek Text: ed. E. Klostermann, *Kleine Texte* 3 (Bonn, 1903); the English translation is taken from M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford, 1955), pp. 92 f. For a summary of recent theories about character and origin of this Gospel, see C. Maurer in Hennecke-Schneemelcher, *Neutestamentamentliche Apokryphen* (Tübingen, 1959), I, 118 ff.

2. (p. 11) The word "myth" occurs in the New Testament in II Pet. 1:16; I Tim. 1:4; 4:7; II Tim. 4:4; Titus 1:14. In these texts, myth

appears to have a meaning different from many of the currently adopted meanings of this word. As in Plato (Tim. 26E), so in the New Testament, myth is equated with a fictive account of something that could not take place, though it may portray some truth. The New Testament, Ignatius, Aristides, Tertullian, consider myth as being by definition "false," and as the opposite of truth or of a true account. Cf. R. M. Grant, *Earliest Lives of Jesus* (New York, 1961), pp. 121 ff.

3. (p. 12) We hold that what G. von Rad repeatedly states in his *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, München (e.g., I [1957], pp. 33 ff.; II [1960], pp. 351 ff.) is true for the New Testament also: the modern demythologizer comes hopelessly late with his best intentions. In the Bible, the battle against myth is already fought; testimony to God's acts in history is given at the expense of a mythical or allegorical communication of timeless verities. When, however, in the Bible a dream (as Pharaoh's, Gen. 41) or a parable (as that of the weeds, Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43) calls for or is given an allegorical interpretation, the allegorical speech is still intended to point out specific, concrete, historical events or actions.

4. (p. 12) R. Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (Göttingen, 1931), pp. 308 ff., makes in his treatment of the resurrection stories liberal use of the terms "resurrection proofs," "apologetic legend," "novelistic motif," "formation of the Hellenistic congregation." H. Grass, *Ostergeschehen und Osterberichte* (Göttingen, 1956, 2nd ed. 1962), proceeds more carefully. On pp. 244-47 (1st ed.) he affirms that in the resurrection "God acted upon Christ" before he acted on the apostolic witnesses, and through their testimony on us, even by the gift of faith. "Out of the appearances (of the risen Christ) originated the Easter faith" (p. 93). But on pp. 249-53, he follows Bultmann's lines and asserts that none of the words attributed to the risen Jesus Christ must be considered authentic words of Christ; all of them are "Easter theology, not Easter history." According to Grass, the Evangelists picked up a tradition created and shaped under the impact of the congregation's "apologetic-missionary interest," and gave it a style and a slant fitting to their respective special concerns.

5. (p. 13) We may add a more general observation: Neither the variety of testimonies, nor the faith of the witnesses, nor the claim that the subject matter of their witness is unique in kind, is sufficient to prove the absence of historicity, or the purely fictitious or mythological character of the resurrection. For there is no historical event which, despite all analogies to other events, does not own a certain individuality; there is no narration or celebration of historic events



which is not carried by the conviction that precisely this event is outstanding and worthy to be deemed a good or warning example; and there is no event that happened before the eyes of all its contemporaries. In each case, specific men or groups are specifically affected by an occurrence, and they deliver to posterity what has happened before them, and what impact it had on them and may or must have on others. The specific character and contents of the resurrection reports of the New Testament scarcely disprove the resurrection.

6. (p. 18) Since M. Dibelius' pioneering treatment of *Die Geisterwelt im Glauben des Paulus* (Göttingen, 1909), more intensive interest has been focused upon the allusions made by Paul to heavenly powers. Among recent studies published in English, we mention G. B. Caird, *Principalities and Powers* (Oxford, 1956); C. D. Morrison, *The Powers That Be* (London, 1960); H. Schlier, *Mächte und Gewalten im Neuen Testament* (Freiburg<sup>2</sup>, 1958), Eng. trans. (1960); A. D. Galloway, *The Cosmic Christ* (New York, 1951). In different publications, Amos Wilder, of Harvard, has emphasized the point that the biblical references to principalities and powers are far from obfuscating or impeding the relevance and actuality of New Testament eschatology and Christology. Rather, they point out the urgency and application of what is preached to the world of power structures in which we live.

7. (p. 18) At this place, a detailed description of the term *katargeo* (to make of no effect, to abrogate) ought to be given. It is questionable whether Paul means by it a complete destruction or annihilation. If, e.g., I Cor. 15:26 is interpreted by reference to 15:35-57, the abrogation of death has the power of swallowing up the mortal in the victory of the imperishable. The German word *Aufhebung* may best describe both the negative and the positive meaning of this word. For a careful discussion of this term, see M. E. Dahl, *The Resurrection of the Body*, "Studies in Biblical Theol." 36, pp. 117-19 (Naperville, 1962).

8. (p. 19) Among the main questions that are answered in widely different ways are the following: Was it Jesus himself who announced and explained his resurrection by opening his disciples' eyes to special hints or predictions in the Old Testament? Did he do so before his death, in connection with the predictions of his sufferings and death? Or were these supposedly early warnings actually *vaticinia ex eventu*, that were put into Jesus' mouth only *after* Jesus' resurrection had taken place and found credence? Should it be true that an insight that was due to the risen Christ, and the post-Easter gift of the Spirit, had made the early disciples establish a connection between Jesus' history and the way of the righteous as described in the Psalms? Is

the Scripture introduced into the preaching on resurrection to confirm its veracity, and to refute unbelievers and doubters? Was there good reason given by the Old Testament to assert that the coming Messiah would rise from the dead, or was it an exegetically dubious trick to use passages dealing with a leader's "raising" by God to restore Israel, as proof texts for affirming the certainty of individual resurrection? Is it the date, i.e. the "third day," or the fact, or the purpose and power of the resurrection that is undergirded by explicit references to Old Testament passages, and by more or less hidden allusions to intertestamental literature?

9. (p. 21) A. M. Ramsey, *The Resurrection of Christ* (London, 1945), pp. 115 f., observes that "a great book telling of what the Resurrection has meant in the thought, doctrine and worship of Christians down the ages" has yet to be written; the Greek theologians (unlike their occidental brethren) have seldom isolated the cross. "Atonement meant to them the victory of the Resurrection."

10. (p. 22) It would seem that Calvin's and the Heidelberg Catechism's intention has to be summed up in such a way. But this view is not a Calvinistic specialty. J. A. Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica* (1961), II, 379, e.g., affirms that by the resurrection, Christ did not merit justice for us, but that the resurrection's fruits are of confirmatory, collateral, and applicatory nature. W. Sanday and A. C. Headlam comment on Rom. 4:25, *Epistle to the Romans*, ICC (Edinburgh, 1958), p. 117, by saying, "Without the resurrection, the sacrifice of Calvary would have been incomplete. The resurrection placed upon the sacrifice the stamp of God's approval; it showed that the sacrifice was accepted." K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV, 2, para. 59:2, describes the resurrection under the heading, "The Father's Verdict." By so doing, he indicates that much of what he had said earlier on the noetical character of resurrection should not be taken as having "only cognitive" weight. Among Roman Catholic exegetical works presenting a similar view, see: E. Prat, *La théologie de Saint Paul* (Paris, II, 7th ed., 1923), pp. 250-56; S. Lyonnet, "La valeur sociologique de la résurrection . . ." in *Gregorianum*, 39 (1958), 295 ff. A. Hulsbosch, "Resurrectio Christi . . ." in *Divus Thomas*, 47-49 (1944-46), 193 ff.; cf. 207 ff.

11. (p. 24) Apologetes of the second and third centuries A.D. invested much energy in a similar task. In order to argue for the possibility and reality of the resurrection, they pointed to the omnipotence of God; they dug up the analogies of the dying and rising seed, of sleeping and awakening; finally, the resurrection of the phoenix was,



among other *paradoxa*, a favorite argument used for the benefit of believers and unbelievers. See R. M. Grant, *Miracle and Natural Law* (Amsterdam, 1952), pp. 221 ff.

12. (p. 25) In his book, *Resurrection and Historical Reason* (New York, 1959), R. R. Niebuhr intends to demonstrate that wantonness and arbitrariness, rather than causality and rational explicability, underlie *all* historical events. Consequently he considers the resurrection an event that is historically possible. A newly to-be-defined "historical reason" has to reckon with resurrection, so Niebuhr concludes. He announces a sort of neo-Kierkegaardian revolt which is directed, however, not so much against Hegel, as against L. v. Ranke's, A. v. Harnack's, and E. Troeltsch's type of historical research and argument.

13. (p. 25) In *Contra Celsum*, II, 55-68, Origen attempts to prove his point by reference to the miracles done by Moses; to the fact that the risen Jesus was touched; to the resurrection of dead people in Old Testament stories; to Old Testament predictions of the Messiah's resurrection; to the behavior of the disciples; to the educational selection of witnesses according to their capacities; to the correlation of revelation and concealment in the incarnation, etc.

14. (p. 28) S. N. Ogden's *Christ Without Myth* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1961) presents a useful, though not equally fair, presentation of the last twenty years' discussion on the topic of demythologizing. The author holds that "the demand for demythologization . . . must be accepted by theology unconditionally." What Bultmann refrained from doing, is here carried through to the bitter end. In following F. Buri and K. Jaspers, Ogden relegates not only the Sonship, the miracles, the sacrifice, the resurrection of Christ, but also the scandal of the cross and of the *kerygma*, to the realm of myth that does not make sense to the modern man. But he goes beyond those critics of Bultmann when he stipulates that a fully demythologized theology will no longer speak of salvation by Christ, of Christocentric faith, of authentic existence based upon Jesus of Nazareth or an encounter with him. There is, so he believes, no saving work performed by Christ; Jesus Christ is but a manifestation of that primordial love which makes possible authentic life (pp. 132 ff., 142 ff.). The result of *Christ Without Myth* is obviously a Christianity (or rather, "authentic existence") without Christ, without *Heilsgeschichte*, without any necessary referent in history.

15. (p. 29) The questions that form-critics set out to answer sound like this: Is Paul's account, given in I Cor. 15, or Luke's description of the



Damascus encounter between Paul and the risen Lord (Acts 9:22; 26), or the Gospels' renditions of the Easter events, the key to understanding the rest of the biblical references? Did the traditions reflected in the Gospels originate from experiences made before the tomb of Jesus, or from encounters that took place on a mountain? Is Jerusalem or Galilee the place of the first appearances or visions of the risen one? Are women, or Peter, or a group of disciples, the original witnesses or visionaries? Are the stories of the empty tomb, or of the appearances, of sheer appearance, or of bodily contact and eating with the risen Jesus, later additions to an original nucleus? When and where did the motifs of recognition and of conquered doubt, of Scripture fulfillment and interpretation, of preaching forgiveness and of administering baptism to Gentiles, of apostolate and church order and worship enter the picture?

16. (p. 35) E. Schweizer, *Lordship and Discipleship* (London, 1960), pp. 59, 64 f., ascribes a geographical meaning to these terms. He speaks of "spheres." K. H. Rengstorf, *Die Auferstehung Jesu* (Witten, 1952), pp. 87 f., expresses a similar belief; Jesus is said to be "put into the order of the divine world." While there is no doubt that the words "flesh" and "spirit" may describe realms or spheres, they also denote a mode, a character, a power. Any localization of Jesus Christ's justification in the Spirit, and of his appearance before the angels—be it in heaven, on earth (in Galilee or Jerusalem, near Damascus or on Patmos), or in the nether world—may imply a restriction of the events indicated to one or another boundary. Indeed, the many possible meanings of the words "flesh," "spirit," "angels," need not exclude the interpretation that in the hymn of I Tim. 3:16, an allusion to the localized post-Easter appearances of the Christ is made, of which the Gospels (except the longer ending of Mark 16:9-20) and Acts treat. But we observe that in this hymn, as much as in Gal. 1 and I Cor. 9 and 15, no interest in locality is indicated. Jerusalem, Galilee, Damascus became starting points of world-wide mission. According to the hymn about the "mystery," which is cited in I Tim. 3:16, not only the world, but all fleshly and spiritual beings in heaven and upon earth are affected by the resurrection. Cf. Phil. 2:10 f.

17. (p. 36) In Matt. 11:19 (as much as in John 1:1-18; Heb. 1:1-4; Matt. 11:28 ff.; Col. 1:15 ff., etc.), Jesus Christ identifies himself, or is equated, with what previously had been said of "Wisdom." The statement, "Wisdom is justified by her deeds," may therefore be considered a parallel to I Tim. 3:16. Both texts make explicit that not sinful men only, but also Jesus Christ himself needs and receives justification. According to the Old Testament, the king, priest, prophet,

servant in Israel is subjected to God's judgment as much as, if not much more than, any individual.

18. (p. 39) H. Conzelmann, *Die Mitte der Zeit* (Tübingen, 1954), p. 85 (Eng. trans.: *The Theology of St. Luke*, London and New York, 1960), suggests that in Acts 5:31, 11:18 the phrase "to give repentance" means the same as in Wisdom of Solomon 12:10, in *Oratio Manasse* 8; in Heb. 12:17: that is, "to give occasion, or to set a day of repentance." This interpretation of Peter's sermon does justice to the Jewish background of Peter and of the first half of Acts. But it does not regard the difference between a "Judaizing" theology, and Peter's (and Luke's) witness. J. Munck, *Paulus und die Heilsgeschichte* (Copenhagen, 1957), esp. pp. 57 f., 78 ff., 270 ff. (Eng. trans.: *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*, 1959), may be right in principle when—in opposition to the followers of the Tübingen view of early Christianity—he insists upon a sharp distinction and difference between the Judaeo-Christianity of the Jerusalem church's type, and the Judaizers whom Paul apostrophizes in his letter to the Galatians. It is most likely that the reaction of the Jewish authorities to Peter's challenge would have been different from what it was according to Acts, if Peter had announced nothing else but one of the occasional or traditional Jewish days of repentance. For a description of the ceremonial and legalistic concepts of repentance see Kittel, *TWB*, IV (Stuttgart, 1942), pp. 976 ff. According to Acts 5:31, it is not repentance or a day (and ceremonial) of repentance, but it is God, who, by the resurrection of Christ, gives forgiveness. In this passage, repentance and forgiveness are gifts of God, not offers or possibilities only.

19. (p. 40) At this place it may be briefly stated that in contradiction to most current teaching on baptism, in the New Testament forgiveness is never said to be conveyed by means of baptism with water.

Matthew omits the words "for forgiveness" in his description of John the Baptist's preaching and baptizing; he inserts it for good reasons in the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper. Thus he makes plain that in opposition to other (early Ebionite? See H. J. Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums* [Tübingen, 1949], esp. pp. 205 ff.; cf. I John 5:6–8) notions, *by the blood* sacrifice of Jesus Christ, not by the institution of baptism, sins are forgiven.

All four canonical Gospels insist upon the Spirit-baptism to be given by the Coming One; though their concept of the Spirit is not identical with that of the Dead Sea Scrolls (esp. IQS III: 3–IV:26), the Gospels agree with the Scrolls in saying that the water ritual of baptism does not bestow purity.

John's Gospel omits any reference to forgiveness in its description of



John the Baptist; the dispute about purification mentioned in 3:25 does not prove that the author or the Baptist consented to an identification of baptism and purification. According to John 15:2-3; 20:22-23, God purifies men by the Word and the Spirit.

In the second century the concepts "bath" and "washing," as they were found in Greek and Old Testament usage, were employed as a designation of Christian baptism (esp. by Justin Martyr, see Kittel, *TWB*, IV, 308 f.). However, this second-century, and later, metaphorical denotation of baptism is not sufficient proof for the thesis that the New Testament means by bath, cleansing, and washing (e.g., in Titus 3:5; I Cor. 6:11; Eph. 5:26; John 13:10), precisely or especially baptism. In one passage only, in Acts 22:16, the acts of "baptizing and washing oneself" (*sic!*) seem to be identified.

But since in other statements baptism is "for forgiveness" or looks "toward forgiveness"; and since in I Pet. 3:21, it is explicitly and emphatically denied that "baptism saves . . . as (ritual and/or spiritual?) removal of the dirt of the flesh," it is safest to assume, with I Peter, that baptism is in essence a form of prayer; i.e., "an application to God for a good conscience by the resurrection of Christ." If so, then the resurrection, rather than baptism, contains promise and gift of a conscience cleansed by forgiveness.

Accordingly, in Heb. 9:9-10, 13-14, 22; 10:22, purification of conscience is ascribed not to baths, but to the blood of Christ and to the eternal Spirit.

So the actual means of grace are the death, the resurrection, the Spirit, rather than baptism or any other act by which man asks for or confesses faith in the gracious God. Cf. M. Barth, *Die Taufe—ein Sakrament?* (Zürich, 1951); K. Barth's forthcoming *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, IV/4:1; and Comment 26, following.

20. (p. 42) See A. Ehrhardt, "Ein antikes Herrscherideal," *Ev. Theol.*, 8 (1948-49), pp. 101 ff., 569 ff. Non-Israelite, extra-biblical expectations may well be reflected in Phil. 2:9-11—but primarily Jewish predictions and hopes concerning a faithful servant, his death, and his final exaltation over all nations are taken up by Phil. 2:6 ff. (See E. Lohmeyer, O. Cullmann, J. Jeremias, interpretations *ad loc.*). At any rate, both the Jewish and the non-Jewish elements reflected by the hymn have been political, and thus political elements may be much more important than all those religious parallels which have been found in (later!) Gnostic documents. (Cf., e.g., E. Käsemann's critical analysis in *Zts. f. Theol. u. Kirche*, XLVII [1950], 310 ff.)

21. (p. 45) In the patristic period, reference to the respective texts is not made when Rom. 13 is exegeted.



But in recent times, M. Dibelius, *Die Geisterwelt* (Göttingen 1909), drew attention to Paul's angelology and demonology. The issue was again brought to public attention and discussion by G. Dehn, "Engel und Obrigkeit," *Theol. Aufsätze für K. Barth* (München, 1936), pp. 90 ff. It became connected with, and fundamental to, K. Barth's participation in the struggle of the Confessing Church waged against nazism and *Deutsche Christen*. Passionate scorn and invectives were hurled at it by G. Kittel, R. Bultmann, G. Bornkamm, H. Campenhausen; but it was defended as a viable alternative by W. Schweitzer, W. Künneth, and especially by O. Cullmann, *Der Staat im Neuen Testament* (Tübingen, 1956), pp. 46 ff., 67 ff. (Eng. trans.: *The State in the New Testament*, New York, 1956). Among the most informative recent essays on this topic, these are outstanding: the critical A. Strobel, "Zum Verständnis von Röm. 13," *Zts. f. NT Wiss.*, XLVII (1956), 67 ff.; the balanced E. Käsemann in *Zts. f. Theol. u. Kirche* (1959), and G. Bauer, "Zur Auslegung und Anwendung von Röm. 13:1-7," *Antwort, K. Barth z. 70. Geburtstag* (Zollikon-Zürich, 1956), pp. 114 ff.; and the excellent E. Wolf, "Remarques théologiques sur Rom. 13," *Foi et Vie*, LX (1961), no. 3, pp. 25 ff.

C. D. Morrison, *The Powers That Be*, "Studies in Biblical Theology," 29 (London and Naperville, 1960), attempts to sum up the discussion of the last fifty years; his thesis is that it was not Christ who became Lord over the powers through his death and resurrection, but that God made the Christians "more than conquerors." "The locus of Christ's work cannot be the cosmic powers, but is the Church" (*op. cit.*, pp. 118, 125, 135). The thesis and the argument of Morrison do not appear convincing. The militant faith given to the church by the Spirit (Rom. 8:37; I Cor. 15:57-58) and described, e.g., in Eph. 6:10-20, has its foundation and source in the victory and honor given to Jesus Christ. Greater strength than the power of *our* faith is required to subdue the angelic and demonic powers; Jesus Christ alone is given all power in heaven and upon earth (Matt. 28:18; Phil. 2:6-11). He "made powerless him who has the power of death" (Heb. 2:11); he "broke down the wall of partition"; he "stripped of power the principalities and authorities and led them captive in his triumphal procession" (Eph. 2:14; Col. 2:19).

22. (p. 46) It appears to be the weakness of the otherwise instructive booklet of C. A. Pierce, *Conscience in the New Testament*, "Studies in Biblical Theology," 15 (London, 1955), that he disregards I Pet. 2:19 almost completely, and thus arrives at a concept of conscience which may be full of resentment against evil, but which knows little or nothing of God. Pierce's stipulation, "a man should be free from con-

science," *op. cit.*, p. 109, certainly does not look like a good contribution to the interpretation of Rom. 13.

23. (p. 51) R. R. Niebuhr, *Resurrection and Historical Reason* (New York, 1959), intends to oppose and to correct the legalistic slavery of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century worshipers of causality and evolution, by magnifying the individuality, arbitrariness—yea, capriciousness—of each and every historical event. For him, law and resurrection are "opposing terms" (esp. pp. 154 f., 164 ff.). But the Old Testament prophets, historiographers, and hagiographers treat historical events as steps on a way which God has marked out for Israel, and which he is going with Israel (cf. G. v. Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* [München, 1960], II 119 f.). The New Testament references to the Old Testament reveal a similar understanding of the essence and meaning of history. Since it is God who makes history, since he is the decisive master and partner in all events that count and are worth recording, explaining, celebrating, the New Testament writers feel free neither to search for a neutral, godless causality, nor to search for an equally noncommitted, atheistic paradoxality. The witnesses of Jesus Christ affirm that they were instructed by Jesus Christ himself to discover and to display a sensible, logical, beautiful correspondence and order between promise (or command) and fulfillment, between antitype and original, between the first and the last man. For the biblical writers, including the apocalyptists, historic events and history are not capricious; but they make good sense. The only arbitrary, lawless, and therefore ugly and paradoxical acts, are those of the lie, of foolishness, or of revolt against God—but never God's acts, and least of all, the redemption from death of the servant of God who had been exposed to the frivolity of sin. Therefore, the resurrection is not a quaint, ugly, frivolous act of God. It is fitting, beautiful, and replete with good sense.

24. (p. 65) In Matt. 5:17-48; 23:1-11, the unique, supreme role of Jesus Christ the fulfiller, interpreter, teacher of the Law (and the Prophets) is programmatically and pragmatically stated.

In distinction from those Gnosticizing gospels that belittle or neglect the earthly ministry of Jesus in favor of the risen Lord's discourses with his disciples, all canonical Gospels give more examples of the earthly Jesus' authoritative teaching, than of the risen Jesus' instruction. Thus they make clear that (always and at all times, Matt. 23:2-4) teaching and fulfilling the Law belong together. There is no better and purer interpretation of the Law than by obedience to it and fulfillment of it. Obedience to the Law is, alone, true exposition



of the Law. Many of the special features which K. Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew* (Uppsala, 1954), ascribes to Matthew, the founder of a "school," may have been taken over from Jesus himself by Matthew and by the church or group for and to which he speaks. Cf. G. Hebert, "The Problem of the Gospel According to Matthew," *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 14 (1961), pp. 403 ff.

C. Dietzfelbinger, "Paulus und das Alte Testament," *Theol. Ex.*, NF 95 (München, 1961), esp. pp. 36 ff., shows, in turn, how for Paul, the confrontation with the *Wirklichkeit Christi* which happened near and since Damascus, became the key to an interpretation of Scriptures that was—if not in method, then yet in its results—different from that of the rabbis and Hellenistic Jews of his period.

25. (p. 71) This interpretation would presuppose that Jesus' form of greeting need not be ascribed solely to the Semitic custom of saying *shalom* (or to the Greek mode of saying or writing *chairete*, Matt. 28:9), but has to do with Aaron's (the High Priest's) peace blessing pronounced after the completion of the sacrifice. The surprising references to the risen Christ's "blessing" of the disciples (Luke 24:50, 51), and of Israel (Acts 3:26), certainly suggest this understanding of the word "peace." Jesus Christ is described as preacher of peace also in Eph. 3:13, 17, and Acts 10:36.

26. (p. 75) The attempt made by N. Clark, *An Approach to the Theology of the Sacraments*, "Studies in Biblical Theology," 17 (London, 1956), pp. 12, 17, to describe John and his baptism as a "last effort to achieve justification by works," and to make Jesus give "a death blow to the Johannine baptism," is rather misleading. If some orthodox and sectarian Jewish circles really did consider repentance and acts of repentance a meritorious work (see, e.g., the apocryphal *Life of Adam and Eve*), their thought and practices are not yet sufficient evidence for stipulating that John the Baptist shared their imaginings. It is probable that many Pharisees and Sadducees (Matt. 3:7), or the whole crowd that came to John (Luke 3:7), assumed through John's baptism to escape the wrath to come. But the Baptist obviously did not condone their error. "Ye brood of vipers, who told you . . .?" This is his reply to those considering baptism an asbestos suit that would protect from the judgment's fire. Clark's polemics against John is further proved uninformed and futile by the fact that, according to the Synoptic tradition, John called for repentance and announced forgiveness exclusively in connection with his proclamation of the Messiah's impending advent. Josephus (*Antiquities*, V. 18) omitted any reference of John's messianic preaching; the Fourth Gospel presents



John as an announcer of one thing only, i.e., of the Messiah, and it does not mention repentance and forgiveness. Josephus' silence is not sufficient proof for rejecting the Gospels' assertion.

While, before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, it was difficult to find an environment in which John might have formed and led a group of people for whom repentance and messianic hope were inseparable, the neighborhood of the Qumran community tells a different story. On the basis of the Righteous Teacher's instruction and of their messianic expectation (of the two Messiahs to come), the Qumran community of *poenitentes* was formed. John the Baptist's movement may have been similarly motivated. But his and other contemporary messianic expectations were not identical. It is most likely that John expected and preached something else than a militant, national, political Messiah who might have been pacified or pleased by some good intentions and works. According to the Gospels, he expected One who would baptize with Spirit, i.e., one who, according to God's promises, would renew Israel by the gifts of grace, forgiveness, new life.

It is probable that John, as much as the Evangelists (who gave him ample space in their Gospels!), as much as the Deutero-Isaiah texts quoted or alluded to in the context of his sermons and descriptions, as much as the Qumranites in his neighborhood, knew well enough that forgiveness is by grace alone, and not by works. If nothing else, then at least the Dead Sea community would form a link between, or a common background to, both the Baptist and Paul. See also Comment 19 preceding.

27. (p. 76) In other respects, Darrow failed. He built his defense upon the basis that the defendants, while committing the crime, were mentally insane. When the judge gave the reason for his decision and for the punishment imposed, he made it plain that neither the alleged mental insanity nor the plea of guilty were considered mitigating circumstances. Only the "dictates of enlightened humanity" saved, so he explained, the "boys" from capital punishment.

In Luke's writings, it looks as if one mitigating circumstance were taken into account—the *ignorance* of the wrongdoers. Peter and Paul speak of the ignorance of the Jews (Acts 3:17; 13:27). Paul speaks of the ignorance of the Gentiles and rulers of this world (Acts 17:23; cf. I Cor. 2:8). According to some texts and versions of Luke 23:34, Jesus interceded for all who were crucifying him: "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they do." Paul defends himself against the charge that he reviled the High Priest, by saying, "I did not know . . ." (Acts 23:5). According to I Tim. 1:13, Paul wrote, "I received mercy; for I did it [blasphemy, persecution, violence against Christ and the Christians] in ignorance."

Could it be that in contrast to usual legal procedure, in the Bible ignorance of the law or of a person is an excuse for felony or misdemeanor? We observe that a reference to ignorance is never made by the judge of whom the sermons in Acts speak. Ignorance is introduced only in the pleas made for or by evildoers. As we mentioned before, the apostles start out like attorneys for God's cause, or like witnesses against men: "You have murdered Jesus!" But they culminate with an amazing turn-about—with a plea in favor of the murderers. Nobody can prohibit their trying to appeal to the judge's mercy by pleading the defendants' former ignorance and late enlightenment. But ignorance, though it is a fact (Matt. 11:27; John 17:25), is not an actual excuse that would force the judge to leniency (see Rom. 2:4; 10:3; I Cor. 14:38; Eph. 4:18; I Pet. 1:14; Isa. 1:3, etc.). In the Bible, ignorance is closer to criminal neglect and contempt, than to lack of intellectual enlightenment. To say of Israel that it does not know God and the ordinance of the Lord, is equal to accusing it of ignoring God foolishly or criminally (see Isa. 1:3; Jer. 8:7).

28. (p. 89) In his *Commentary on Romans* of 1515-16 (ed. by J. Ficker, Leipzig, 1930, *Scholien*, p. 14; Eng. trans.: ed. by W. Pauck, in "Library of Christian Classics," New York, 1961), Luther had flatly denied that the term "righteousness of God" meant the essential righteousness of God (sc. *qua ipse iustus est in se ipso*). Luther held that exclusively the justification of the godless by God (sc. *qua nos ex ipso justificamur*), was the sense of that concept. The demythologizing and anthropocentricity of some present-day theology is directly related to, and dependent upon, Luther's seeming unconcern in God's own righteousness. E. Käsemann, "Gottesgerechtigkeit bei Paulus," *Zts. f. Theol. u. Kirche*, LVIII (1961), 367 ff., seeks to avoid Bultmann's anthropocentric and individualistic interpretations of Paul (p. 373), and to establish the eschatological character and world-wide impact of God's righteousness as taught by Paul (pp. 377 f.). But he continues on Luther's line: only the action of God, not God's own nature, is called righteous (p. 371). This separation of essence from action makes little sense. For God is what he does. W. Dantine, *Gerechtmachung*, 65, 79, 88, observes rightly that in the Bible there is more emphasis on the question of whether or not God be righteous, than on the problem of whether God exists. According to Rom. 3:21-31, the "one God," who is God of the Jews and Gentiles, reveals himself as righteous by the justification of the sinners. He who knows that, and how, God is righteous, knows also that God is—even that he is one!

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## ABBREVIATIONS

- ICC International Critical Commentary  
 TWB Kittel, G. *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*

## PART ONE

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